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The Chanson d'Antioche

An Old French Account of the First Crusade

Translated by
Susan B. Edgington and
Carol Sweetenham



Crusade Texts in Translation 22

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CRUSADE TEXTS IN TRANSLATION

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About the volume

The Old-French *Chanson d'Antioche* has long intrigued historians and literary scholars. Unusually among epic poems, it follows closely a well documented historical event - the First Crusade - and appears to include substantial and genuine historical content. At one time it was believed to be based on an account by an eye-witness, 'Richard the Pilgrim'. Carol Sweetenham and Susan Edgington have combined forces to investigate such claims, and their findings are set out in a comprehensive introduction which, firstly, examines the textual history of the poem from its possible oral beginnings through several re-workings to its present form, achieved early in the thirteenth century. A second chapter assesses the *Chanson's* value as a source for the crusade, and a third considers its status as a literary text.

A complete prose translation follows, the first in English and based on the definitive edition. The *Chanson* is revealed as a lively narrative, with tales of chivalry, villainy, and even episodes of humour. There are extensive footnotes to the translation, and an appendix provides supplementary material from a different manuscript tradition. There is also a cast list of heroes and villains with biographical information for the 'real' ones and literary analogues for the fictional characters. The *Chanson d'Antioche* can now be read for enjoyment, and for a whole new perspective on crusading in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

About the translators

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*This book is dedicated to the memories of Elspeth Kennedy and
Julian Chrysostomides*

THE *CHANSON D'ANTIOCHE*

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The *Chanson d'Antioche*

An Old French Account of the First Crusade

Translated by

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Abbreviations

<i>A</i>	<i>Aevum</i>
<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Byzantion</i>
<i>BH</i>	<i>Bulletin Hispanique</i>
<i>DR</i>	<i>Dublin Review</i>
<i>FHS</i>	<i>French Historical Studies</i>
<i>FMLS</i>	<i>Forum for Modern Language Studies</i>
<i>GRLMA</i>	<i>Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters</i>
<i>H</i>	<i>History</i>
<i>HR</i>	<i>Historical Review</i>
<i>HT</i>	<i>History and Theory</i>
<i>JHR</i>	<i>Journal of Hispanic Research</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
<i>JOAS</i>	<i>Journal of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>JWCI</i>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute</i>
<i>MA</i>	<i>Le Moyen Age</i>
<i>MGHS</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historiae Scriptores</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Medieval Studies</i>
<i>MW</i>	<i>Moslem World</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
<i>O</i>	<i>Olifant</i>
<i>OFCC</i>	<i>The Old French Crusade Cycle</i>
<i>P</i>	<i>Parergon</i>
<i>PM</i>	<i>Perspectives Médiévales</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Modern Language Association</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>Romania</i>
<i>RG</i>	<i>Romanica Gandensia</i>
<i>RHC Occ</i>	<i>Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Occidentaux</i> (5 vols, Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1844-96).
<i>RHC Or</i>	<i>Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Orientaux</i> (5 vols, Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1872-1906).
<i>RLR</i>	<i>Revue de langues romanes</i>
<i>RMS</i>	<i>Reading Medieval Studies</i>
<i>RN</i>	<i>Romance Notes</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Romanic Review</i>

<i>SCH</i>	<i>Studies in Church History</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>Traditio</i>
<i>T-L</i>	<i>A. Tobler, Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch : bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Erhard Lommatzsch (11 vols, Berlin: Weidmann, 1925-2002) [Tobler-Lommatzsch]</i>
<i>ZFSL</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur</i>
<i>ZRP</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie</i>

Preface

We owe Professor Linda Paterson a big debt of gratitude for her thorough reading of a first draft and her perceptive comments: this book is the better for it, and indeed would not have been undertaken without her. Our work has also benefited from insights given by Marianne Ailes, Malcolm Barber, Matthew Bennett, Chris Foot, Sarah Kay, Gordon Knott, Conor Kostick, Jonathan Phillips, and John Tolan at various points and in various contexts. Parts of it were tested on colleagues in the Société Rencesvals and at the Institute of Historical Research in London; their comments were invaluable. It goes without saying that we are entirely responsible for any failings in the work.

We have used Mme. Suzanne Duparc-Quioe's excellent edition of the *Chanson d'Antioche* as the basis for our translation, and acknowledge the assistance of the publishers, Paul Geuthner, in trying to trace copyright for this. We thank the University of Alabama Press for permission to translate extracts from the late Jan Nelson's edition of the *Chanson* in our Appendix 1.

We should like to thank the Taylorian Institute, the Bodleian Library, the Sackler Institute, and the History Faculty Library in Oxford for their unfailing helpfulness, and in particular Janet Foot at the Taylorian for help navigating databases. We thank our editor at Ashgate, Dr John Smedley, for his patience and help. We are grateful to our families for support and occasional distraction: on the one hand computer tamer *extraordinaire* Philip Sweetenham, and Oliver and William Sweetenham for sharing their mother's attention with Graindor de Douai and Richard le Pèlerin; on the other Ben and Penny Edgington, Rebecca and Mike Richardson, and four granddaughters who have all this fun ahead of them.

Finally, both of us lost a revered mentor during the preparation of this volume, and we have dedicated it to them: Elspeth Kennedy, Professor of Medieval French in the University of Oxford, and Julian Chrysostomides, Reader in Byzantine History and Director of the Hellenic Institute at Royal Holloway, University of London.

SUSAN B. EDGINGTON and CAROL SWEETENHAM

August 2011

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PART I

Introduction

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Chapter 1

The Textual History of the *Chanson d'Antioche*

In this chapter we examine the textual history of the *Chanson d'Antioche*. The chapter starts with the vexed questions of authorship and dating. It traces the development of the text during the twelfth century and examines its metamorphosis into the wider Old French Crusade Cycle (hereafter OFCC or Cycle), cross-referring as necessary to the parallel Occitan textual tradition. There is a brief description of the manuscripts containing the text and their evolution throughout the thirteenth century, a witness to the continuing interest in the text. We finish with a summary of the subsequent literature based on the legends in the Cycle.

Authorship and dating

Received wisdom on the authorship and dating of the *Antioche* goes something like this. The text is a quasi-diary of the First Crusade by a poor crusader known as Richard le Pèlerin, written at the time of or just after the Crusade in the form of the vernacular *chanson de geste*. Richard's work was used by the Lotharingian chronicler Albert of Aachen and referred to by other authors. Richard was thus both an eyewitness to events and a pioneer: the first author by nearly a century to use vernacular poetry – and specifically the *chanson de geste* – to describe current events. Towards the end of the twelfth century Richard's text was substantially reworked by another author, Graindor de Douai. Graindor kept enough of the original for it to be discernible beneath his reworking, and for the last third he relied heavily on the work of Robert the Monk. He also edited the text to turn it into a trilogy with the *Chanson des Chétifs* and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*. During the thirteenth century other texts were added to this nucleus to form the OFCC, which was substantially complete by the middle of the thirteenth century.¹

¹ This summarises the views of P. Paris, G. Paris, Pigeonneau, Sumberg and Duparc-Quioc. See also A. Hatem, *Les poèmes épiques des croisades: génèse – historicité – localisation* (Paris, 1932); C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades* (Paris, 1940). The arguments are set out in more detail in C. E. Sweetenham, 'Antioch and Flanders: some reflections on the writing of the *Chanson d'Antioche*', in P. E. Bennett, A. E. Cobby and J. E. Everson (eds), *Epic and Crusade: proceedings of the colloquium of the Société Rencesvals British Branch held at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, 27–28 March 2004* (Edinburgh, 2006), pp. 131–51.

The evidence - or not - for Richard

The problem with the Richard-as-pioneer theory is that there is no solid evidence for it. There is no external corroboration for his existence, although in fairness as a supposed 'homme du peuple' it would be surprising if there were.² So our only piece of evidence is internal to the *Antioche*. In the account of the battle of Antioch is a list of 38 Saracen kings forming a counterpart to the list of Christian barons just given. The names are the usual mix of fantasy, history and abuse.³ At the end of the list comes the comment:

Cil ki le cançon fist sot bien dire les nons
Ricans li pelerins de qui nos le tenons.⁴

If we take this at face value it says simply that Richard knew a list of standard-issue Saracen names and produced the 'cançon'; it is implied that the names formed part of this song. We might reasonably assume from context that it was about the First Crusade, or at least the battle of Antioch. But we have no way of knowing what kind of song it was: a full-blown *chanson de geste*, a much shorter composition like those of William IX of Poitiers, or something else.⁵ We do not know whether it was in Latin or in the vernacular. Neither do we know whether it covered the entire First Crusade, events at Antioch or just the culminating battle of Antioch. And there is no hint in the reference as to whether Richard was a contemporary eyewitness or produced a later account: there is a reference at v.8377 to 'cil qui la fu' though Richard is not named. The present tense 'tenons' might imply that Richard is in fact still alive.⁶

The question of Richard's existence or non-existence has become inextricably linked with the debate about the source material of the *Antioche*. We discuss below

² S. Duparc-Quioç, *La Chanson d'Antioche* (2 vols, Paris, 1976–78), vol. 2, *Étude critique*, p. 217: 'il vivait le plus souvent avec les gens de pied.'

³ vv. 9015–26: the list includes David and Solomon, the descriptively named Tenebrois and Claras de Sarmazane.

⁴ vv. 9013–14: 'the author of the song – Richard the Pilgrim, from whom we have it – knew the names very well'.

⁵ William IX of Poitiers wrote songs about his experiences in the Holy Land according to Orderic Vitalis [OV], 'miserias captivatis suae ut erat iocundus et Lepidus ... multotiens retulit rithmicis versibus cum facietis modulationibus' ('being a gay and light-hearted man, he often recited the trials of his captivity ... using rhythmic verses and skilful modulations'): *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (6 vols, Oxford, 1969–75), vol. 5, pp. 342–3. None survives, and possibly Orderic is extrapolating back from William's later fame as the 'first troubadour'. But if William's extant lyrics are any guide, they might have been short vernacular songs of a few stanzas: *Guglielmo d'Aquitania: poesie*, ed. N. Pasero (Modena, 1973).

⁶ R. F. Cook, *Chanson d'Antioche, chanson de geste: le cycle de la croisade est-il épique?* (Amsterdam, 1980), p. 27.

the evidence for some kind of earlier version, and it seems beyond doubt that some such version of the material in the text did exist. But there is no evidence that it was written by Richard le Pèlerin, and much less that it was a *chanson de geste* written as a diary of the crusade.

So why the reference to Richard? It was standard practice in the *chanson de geste* to assert authenticity by claiming that the text came from an eyewitness or other impeccable source. The *Chanson de Roland*, famously, ascribes itself to Turolde; *Girart de Roussillon* claims to be by a monk named Sestu.⁷ What better, then, than to claim a source who had been a crusader – ‘pèlerin’ – himself? Kleber argued that the name of Richard became a badge of authenticity attached to successive versions of the text.⁸ That said, it is strange to drop the reference casually into the middle of an account of battle. Such references could be expected to come at the start or end of the text.⁹ Graindor gives a long and elaborate prologue but does not mention Richard once in it. We might have expected more detail and prominence if Richard was indeed cited as a guarantee of eyewitness authenticity.

The most we can take from the reference is that Richard was a pilgrim or crusader at some point – by no means necessarily the First Crusade – and that he produced some kind of preceding poetic text that contained this list of Saracen names. We do not know what form this work had, when it was written, or what it contained.¹⁰

The ‘reworking’ of ‘Graindor de Douai’

Graindor de Douai, the supposed *remanieur* of Richard’s supposed ur-text, has had a bad press. He has been accused of acting as some kind of literary vandal, spoiling the primitive beauty of Richard’s *Antioche* with later material in his attempt to knit together the *Antioche*, the *Chétifs* and the *Jérusalem* into a coherent trilogy.¹¹

⁷ *La Chanson de Roland*, ed. I. Short (Paris, 1990), v. 4002; *Girart de Roussillon*, ed. W. M. Hackett (3 vols, Paris, 1953–55), vv. 24–6. H. Pigeonneau, *Le cycle de la croisade et la famille de Bouillon* (Paris, 1877), p. 146 has a nice turn of phrase: ‘ces manuscrits découverts un beau jour au fond de quelque abbaye, recopiés par l’ordre d’un pieux abbé et dont ils ne sont que les modestes et fidèles éditeurs.’

⁸ H. Kleber, ‘Wer ist der Verfasser der Chanson d’Antioche? Revision einer Streitfrage’, *ZFSL*, 94 (1984), p. 142.

⁹ The reference to Turolde is the last line of the Oxford *Roland*; *Girart*’s reference to Sestu is at the start.

¹⁰ Even his name varies. He is ‘Guicars li pelerin’ in mss F and G, and omitted in E.

¹¹ H. Kleber, ‘Graindor de Douai: remanieur-auteur-mécène?’, in K.-H. Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade* (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 66–75; Duparc-Quioc, *Étude*, p. 217: ‘c’est donc le côté pittoresque, épique de la croisade que nous a montré Richard et on le verrait bien davantage si la dernière partie de la chanson ... n’avait pas été si modifiée par Graindor.’

As with Richard we have only one reference to Graindor de Douai in the text of the *Antioche*. In the prologue come the following lines:

Cist novel jogleor qui en suelent canter
 Le vrai commencement en ont laisié ester,
 Mais Graindor de Douai nel velt mie oblier
 Ki nos en a les vers tous fais renover.¹²

What this actually says is that new (fashionable?) *jongleurs* have ceased to give the text its proper beginning. Graindor does not think it should be forgotten and has rewritten the text or had it rewritten accordingly. It is not clear from this reference whether the rewriting is of the whole poem or only the start, or indeed the prologue. Nor is it clear whether the anonymous narrator – ‘nos’ – is the author of the new version or the recipient of Graindor’s new version.

There are two other references to an earlier version. The prologue adds further details:

Oï l’avés chanter en une autre chancon,
 Mais n’estoit pas rimee ensi com nos l’avon,
 Rimee est de novel et mise en quarregon.
 Mais cil qui le rima n’i vaut metre son non,
 Por cou que tels l’oist quin froncast le grenon.¹³

Peter the Hermit’s vision of the Holy Sepulchre and subsequent departure on crusade was the true start of the poem. It was described in another poem written in a different rhyme (perhaps assonanced?) and/or metre; it is not clear whether this poem covered only the true start of the crusade or more material. An anonymous author restyled it and wrote it down; he preferred to remain anonymous because the listeners disliked either him or his poetry. So if we take the text at face value there were two anonymous versions of this earlier poem, one apparently oral and in an undetermined metre, the later one written down and in rhyme.

The final reference is at the closing lines of the poem.

¹² Laisse 1, vv. 12–15: ‘these upstart *jongleurs* who go around singing it have left out the proper beginning, but Graindor de Douai – who has had all the lines brought up to date for us – has no intention of forgetting it.’

¹³ Laisse 3, vv. 78–82: ‘you have heard this recounted in another song, but not in rhyme like the version we have: it has acquired a new rhyme scheme and been written down. However the author who turned it into rhyme did not dare put his name to it in case his audience turned up their noses at it.’

Segnor, or voel que soit ceste raisons finee
 Cil qui ces vers a fais et la rime trovee
 Dusqu'à une autre fois qu'ele ert renovelee.¹⁴

This tells us merely that the author of this version wrote and rhymed the text. It is unclear whether this author is to be identified with the anonymous but unpopular author above. It is not clear whether the last line envisages an overhaul of the text at some point in future. There are a further two references to a previous source: judging by the context this is Robert the Monk.¹⁵

All this is very confusing. Graindor may be the author or may be the commissioner of this version. Either way he is responsible for giving the work a new beginning describing the crusade of Peter the Hermit. This at least, and perhaps more, comes from a previous work by an anonymous author who wrote down and put into rhyme a previous anonymous version that was not written down and not in rhyme. The relationship between the earlier written text and this one is not clear. We can say with certainty only that there was at least one previous version of the first part of the text and Graindor either commissioned someone to restore the proper beginning to the text or rewrote it himself.

Furthermore, not all versions of the text refer to Graindor. He is mentioned by name in the oldest version of the *Antioche*, mss. A, B and C: in manuscript E he is Hervix de Douai, and he is not mentioned at all in mss. F, G and L.¹⁶

So the internal evidence for Graindor's work is not clear-cut. There is some – slender – external evidence for an author with a similar name working at a similar time. There are parallels of names, language and incident between the Crusade trilogy texts, and the *Fierabras* and the *Destruction de Rome* that precedes it.¹⁷

¹⁴ Laisse 374, vv. 9580–82: 'My lords, now the author who wrote these lines and crafted the rhymes wants to bring this account to an end until the next time it is reworked.'

¹⁵ Laisse 292, v. 7244, 'se l'estoire ne ment' ('if the story is to be believed'); laisse 366, v. 9339, 'Li escriis le tesmoigne et si est verités' ('this is not a tall tale and you deny it at your peril'). Both come in passages translated from Robert and refer to his material.

¹⁶ See Duparc-Quioç's note to v. 14 (*Édition*, p. 19). For other similar references see M. Delbouille, 'Les chansons de geste et le livre', in *La technique littéraire des chansons de geste: actes du colloque de Liège, septembre 1957* (Paris, 1959), pp. 333–4, where he lists a variously named Graindor de Brie, Jendeus de Brie and Gautier de Douai.

¹⁷ *La destruction de Rome*, ed. L. Formisano (Florence, 1981); also *La destruction de Rome: d'après le manuscrit de Hanovre IV*, 578, ed. J. H. Speich (Berne, 1988), vv. 1–21; also 'La destruction de Rome et Fierabras: ms Egerton 3028, Musée Britannique, Londres', Louis Brandin, *R*, 64 (1938), pp. 18–100. Gordon Knott has drawn attention to the resemblances between some of the Saracen names in the *Jérusalem* and *Fierabras*, and suggested that the Bishop of Forez from the *Chétifs* may also be referred to in *Fierabras* (ed. Marc Le Person (Paris, 2003)). The King of Nubia from the Cycle is killed in the *Destruction* vv. 853–8. Some of the language used – 'si orrés bone chanchon de bien enluminee:/ N'i avera fable dite ne mensonge provee'; 'le chanchon ert perdue et le rime faussee' (vv. 3–4, 7) – is close to that of the *Antioche*. Shadowy reminiscences of the

The prologue of the *Destruction* attributes it to a reworking of an older text found at St-Denis by King Louis and a Gautier de Douai.¹⁸ The castellans of Douai did indeed bear the name Walter (Gautier) from the eleventh into the fourteenth centuries, starting with Walter I 1051–1111; Walter III bore the title between 1199 and 1207/8; and Walter IV from 1217 to no later than 1252.¹⁹ Mandach suggests that Walter I wrote *Fierabras* in conjunction with Louis VI and acquired the soubriquet 'Grain d'Or' at some point in the process; he would also have been responsible for the *Antioche* drawing on the military expertise he had acquired at the battle of Hastings.²⁰ This is difficult to evidence, and does not fit with what the *Antioche* tells us about Graindor. But arguably the text preserves a memory of some link to the castellans of Douai.

In sum, the evidence for Graindor's existence is not much stronger than that for Richard's. His name varies between versions; it is unclear whether he was author or commissioner; and he disappears in later redactions of the text. So it is hard to assert definitively that Graindor was the author of the text as it now stands. But he may well have commissioned it, and some link with the castellans of Douai – real or perceived – may lurk in the background.

So who did write the *Antioche*?

The conclusions we can draw from this evidence are limited. We discuss below the evidence for some form of ur-*Antioche*: it is clear that some such text existed and a text needs an author. But there is no convincing evidence either that Richard was that author or that he existed at all. Graindor's existence has a shade more conviction, but we do not know whether he was author or commissioner. The allusions in the text point to a complex history of *remaniement*. All this suggests a much more complex textual history than a simple reworking of Richard's original text by Graindor.

Antioche do seem in places to lurk behind the text of the *Destruction*: the beheading of the Pope recalls that of the priest at Mass (vv. 1263–5), Rome is like Antioch handed over by a traitor (vv. 1187–236) and there is a whirling image of Apollon on top of a mast (vv. 227–30, 330–32).

¹⁸ *Destruction*, vv. 10–19.

¹⁹ E. Warlop, *The Flemish Nobility before 1300* (4 vols, Courtrai, 1976), vol. 3, pp. 765–73.

²⁰ A. de Mandach, *Naissance et développement de la chanson de geste en Europe. V: 'La Geste de Fierabras'* (Geneva, 1987), pp. 109–28. See the refutation by Gordon Knott, 'Notes on Reality and Improbability in *Fierabras*,' *O*, 20 (1995–96), pp. 145–70, esp. 161–5.

Potential predecessors? The evolution of the text during the twelfth century

No manuscript preserves any form of the *Antioche* pre-dating the version in the Old French Crusade Cycle. But the creation of the Cycle and external evidence suggest that an earlier version or versions of the text of some kind evolved during the twelfth century.

Early *chanson de geste* material contemporary (more or less) with the Crusade

There is no extant Old French *chanson de geste* describing and contemporary with the Crusade. But the Latin chronicles written in the years immediately following the Crusade contain material that reflects closely the conventions of the *chanson de geste*. The most striking is the run of episodes about Corbaran and his mother, in which he mocks the Christian weapons, sends a letter to the Caliph, and has a long dialogue with his mother as she attempts to persuade him not to fight because her prophecies suggest he will lose. These appear not only in the early *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum* but in the four texts which are based on it, though not in other sources for the crusade: all these are likely to pre-date 1110.²¹ The list of Saracen kings at the battle of Antioch appears in closely similar form in Peter Tudebode, who was an eyewitness at least to events at Jerusalem.²² Both Raymond of Aguilers and Fulcher of Chartres preserve material about Amedelis as Corbaran's confidant and his game of chess before the battle of Antioch. Ralph of Caen refers to the game of chess in terms that suggest it was widely known; interestingly most of the verse in his account is centred on events

²¹ Latin texts are footnoted in translations (where these exist). For editions of the texts see the bibliography. Here *GF*: *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, ed. and trans. R. Hill (London, 1962); *PT*: *Peter Tudebode: Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, trans. J. H. and L. L. Hill (Philadelphia, 1974). For a recent discussion see J. Rubinstein, 'What is the *Gesta Francorum* and who was Peter Tudebode?', *RM*, 77 (2005), pp. 179–204. *GF* was reworked by three Benedictine clerics in the first decade of the century: Baudri of Bourgueil, bishop of Dol; Guibert of Nogent, abbot of St-Germer de Fly; and Robert the Monk [BB; GN; RM]. BB added elegance but relatively little new material (*Historia Jerosolymitana*, *RHC Occ* 4, pp. 1–111). GN added historical context alongside new and sometimes lurid material: *The Deeds of God through the Franks: A translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos*, trans. R. Levine (Woodbridge, 1997). RM included additional material from an unidentified source: *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade*, trans. C. E. Sweetenham (Aldershot, 2005). The passage in question describes Corbaran's mocking of some elderly Christian weapons, his summoning of other Saracen help, and a long burlesque discussion with his mother who foretells doom and suggests he should flee: *GF*, pp. 51–6, followed by *PT* 93–96, *BB*, pp. 60–64; *GN*, pp. 96–8; *RM*, pp. 154–7. The *Antioche*'s version is translated from *RM* and holds no clues to an earlier rendering.

²² *PT*, pp. 97–8 for the list of kings; p. 116 for his presence at Jerusalem.

at Antioch and his translators suggest this may come from a fictional epic source.²³ Guibert of Nogent is the only chronicler to refer to the Tafurs, and to link them with cannibalism.²⁴ Such legendary material is found in particular in the chronicle of Albert of Aachen: his description of Soliman, the embassy to the Sultan by Sansadoine and references to Rosseleon (the Rouge Lion of the *Antioche*) are all closely paralleled in the extant *Antioche*.²⁵

Insofar as we can draw any conclusions about this material, it all relates to the depiction of Saracen opponents and to events at Antioch. It is also striking that different elements of similar material appear across such a wide range of chronicles: this suggests both that chroniclers drew separately on the material and that it was well known.

It is hard to gauge how much, if any, of this material is reflected in the extant text. The *Antioche* incorporates Saracen-related material found in Albert and Robert, and when this is the case the text prefers the version mediated by them; we cannot assume it preserves material from any earlier tradition unchanged. The scenes of Corbaran in the run-up to the battle and the cannibalism of the Tafurs both show close similarities to what is preserved in other texts, although this might reflect acquaintance with legend and tradition around the Crusade rather than any specific text. Perhaps the most likely survival is the list of Saracen kings also quoted in Tudebode. More speculatively, the runs of formulaic *laissez* that describe the disposition of forces around Antioch, Adhemar's attempts to persuade other leaders to carry the Lance out to battle in Antioch and the marching out of the squadrons for the battle itself may also reflect the incorporation of pre-existing *chanson de geste* style material.²⁶

Other episodes in the *Antioche* are similar in nature but not corroborated in any other account. Much of this material recounts individual exploits: the capture of a warhorse by Gontier of Aire; the heroism of Raimbaut Creton; the episode of

²³ Raymond of Aguilers [RA] was another eyewitness and chaplain to Raymond of St-Gilles: *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Jerusalem*, trans. J. H. and L. L. Hill (Philadelphia, PA, 1968). Fulcher of Chartres [FC] was chaplain to Baldwin of Boulogne, later Baldwin I of Jerusalem: after Baldwin took Edessa he was not present on the Crusade and drew on *GF* and RA: *Fulcher of Chartres: a history of the expedition to Jerusalem*, trans. H. S. Fink and Sister F. R. Ryan (Knoxville, TN, 1969). For Amedelis and chess see RA, p. 62; FC, pp. 104–5. Ralph of Caen [RC] comments, 'Persarum satrapam scaccis operam dare fama est' ('it is well known that the satrap of the Persians was playing chess'): *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: a history of the Normans on the First Crusade* (Aldershot, 2005), p. 106.

²⁴ GN, p. 146.

²⁵ Albert of Aachen [AA], *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and trans. S. B. Edgington (Oxford, 2007). For details see discussion below.

²⁶ *Laissez* 127–39; 307–14; 315–28. On resemblances between *GF* and the *Antioche* see J. Beer, 'Heroic language and the eyewitness: the *Gesta Francorum* and the *Chanson d'Antioche*', in D. P. and M. J. Schenck (eds), *Echoes of the Epic: Studies in Honor of Gerard J. Brault* (Birmingham, AL, 1998), pp. 1–16 and below, chapter 3.

Eurvin of Creel, Pierre Postel and a donkey; the death of Rainald of Toul at the battle of Antioch; and Wicher's heroism in capturing the standard afterwards.²⁷ All these are ascribed to soldiers from the area of NE France and Lotharingia in which the *Antioche* originates: arguably these represent authentic traditions handed down in families and incorporated at some point in the *Antioche*. Some are clearly signposted as discrete episodes with a formula such as 'or oïés' or 'or escoutés'.²⁸ There are a few further elements not found elsewhere: the positive role played by Taticius; a raid on a baggage train during the siege of Antioch; Adhemar's suggestion of an embassy to Corbaran; Bohemond's canvassing of opinion in the army; and the heroism of Godfrey pursuing Corbaran after the battle of Antioch.²⁹ How far these represent embellishment at a late stage and how far original material we cannot determine. The most we can say is that some of the material preserved in the extant *Antioche* would not look out of place in a more conventional *chanson de geste*.

None of this is sufficient evidence to say that there was an early *chanson de geste* about the Crusade. There was certainly nothing out of the ordinary in literary accounts being generated virtually in parallel with events. In Latin Bishop Guy of Amiens produced a verse account of the Norman Conquest within ten years.³⁰ William IX, as explained above, allegedly produced entertaining poems about his own experiences on the disastrous follow-up to the Crusade in 1101. We know too that the conventions for depicting Saracens were well established by 1100: the Oxford version of the *Chanson de Roland* already contains orchards and luxury, the unholy trinity of Apollon, Mohammed and Tervagant overthrown in defeat, and lists of fantasy names and people.³¹ So there is nothing surprising in the concept of some kind of early fantasy material depicting Saracens in line with the conventions of the *chanson de geste*: it is, interestingly, in the context of this material that the reference to Richard is found.³²

However, this does not mean that such a text existed. It has been generally assumed that it did, largely on the basis that the extant *Antioche* is a *chanson de geste*, and on the characteristics of the preserved material. Equally it could

²⁷ Gontier, laisses 142–3; Raimbaut Creton, laisses 167–9; Eurvin and Pierre, laisse 303; Rainald, laisse 334; Wicher, laisse 358.

²⁸ Laisse 167, v. 3815; laisse 358, v. 9080.

²⁹ The raid at laisses 144–5; Adhemar's suggestion, laisse 294; Bohemond's foreshadowing of Henry V, laisse 302; Godfrey's pursuit of Corbaran, laisses 362–5.

³⁰ *The Carmen de Hastingae Proelio of Guy, Bishop of Amiens*, ed. C. Morton and H. Muntz (Oxford, 1972).

³¹ For dating see C. Samaran, 'Sur la date approximative du *Roland* d'Oxford', *R*, 94 (1973), pp. 523–7; G. J. Brault, *The Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition* (2 vols, London, 1978), vol. 1, p. 4. For Saracen luxury in the *Roland* see vv.11–13; for Saracen gods dethroned vv.2580–91; for names vv. 3220–61.

³² In the list of Saracen kings of Antioch shared with Tudebode: laisse 356; PT, pp. 97–8.

have represented gossip and popular material that used the conventions of the *chanson de geste* to depict the Saracen opponent because that was the obvious frame of reference. Either way it was sufficiently well known for some elements to make their way into contemporary Latin chronicles. There is, however, not enough evidence to assert that a full Old French *chanson de geste* describing the Crusade existed at or shortly after it.

An early Occitan poem about the Crusade

What we do have evidence for is an Occitan poem describing the Crusade and virtually contemporary with it, although again we do not know whether it was a *chanson de geste* or some other type of poem. The chronicler Geoffrey of Vigeois, writing towards the end of the twelfth century, describes how an otherwise unknown Gregory Bechada wrote an 'ingens volumen', 'materna ... lingua, ritmo vulgari' describing the events of the Crusade at the request of Bishop Eustorge of Limoges; this was a major work taking, according to Vigeois, twelve years to write. The description implies that he drew on eyewitness accounts, notably seeking advice from an otherwise unknown 'Gaubertus ... Normannus'.³³ It dates from the first half of the twelfth century, probably earlier rather than later.³⁴ We do not know what metre or form the poem used, or how far it might have reflected early *chanson de geste* conventions. We can, though, surmise that it was an unusual work given the amount of space Vigeois devotes to describing it: it is unique in his chronicle. More generally, we know that the early twelfth century was a time of literary experiment in Occitania: Bechada's text would be near contemporary, for example, with the lyrics of William IX of Aquitaine, Cercamon and Marcabru.³⁵

This work does not survive: the extant *Canso* is much later and closely related to the Old French version.³⁶ So we cannot speculate about how it might have related to the possible *chanson de geste* lurking behind the early twelfth-century Latin chronicles of the Crusade. But it strengthens the case that such material might have existed.

³³ Geoffrey of Vigeois, *Chronica Gaufredi coenobitae*, in *Novae Bibliothecae Manuscripti librorum: Rerum Aquitanicarum praesertim Bituricensium uberrima collectio*, ed. Philippe Labbé (2 vols, Paris, 1657), vol. 2, pp. 279–342; vol. 1, p. 30.

³⁴ For discussion see *The Canso d'Antiocha: An Occitan Epic of the First Crusade*, ed. C. Sweetenham and L. M. Paterson (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 8–9 [*Canso*].

³⁵ For an overview see S. G. Nichols, 'The early troubadours', in S. Gaunt and S. Kay (eds), *The Troubadours: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 66–82.

³⁶ *Canso*, pp. 26–7.

References during the twelfth century

By the end of the twelfth century some form of this material had clearly metamorphosed into a recognisable *chanson de geste*. However, the two key references are both in Occitan, and therefore we do not know whether they relate to an Old French version or to an Occitan version.

The first comes in an Occitan *ensenhamen* by the Catalan troubadour Guiraut de Cabrera addressed to his *jongleur* Cabra.³⁷ The premise is that the unfortunate Cabra is so poor at his job that he does not know any of the texts he should, and to prove the point the poem helpfully lists what these are. Most of the 142 names in the poem refer to *chansons de geste*. One of these is a ‘canso d’Antioica’. The date of the *ensenhamen* has been variously set between 1150 and 1198.³⁸ This suggests strongly that by the end of the twelfth century at the latest there was a poem about the crusade that was well known and likely to have been a *chanson de geste*. The reference also suggests that its focus was events at Antioch, not the crusade more generally.

What we do not know is whether this refers to an Occitan or a French version. Cabrera’s poem is of no help since it refers indiscriminately to French and Occitan texts. We know that there was substantial cross-over between Occitan and French epic: *Daurel et Beton* for example is closely related to the Anglo-Norman *Beuve de Hantone*.³⁹ So it would have been quite possible for an Occitan audience to know a French epic, and indeed for it to have been adapted into Occitan. Equally it could have been an independent Occitan work which might either be or have links back to Bechada’s earlier work.

The second reference lies in the Occitan *Canso de la Crozada*, a chronicle of the Albigensian Crusade written in the metre and style of a *chanson de geste*. The first author was Guilhem of Tudela, a cleric from Navarre; the second part is by an anonymous author probably from Toulouse. Tudela’s work dates from no later than 1212–13.⁴⁰

Tudela states at the start of his poem that he is modelling his work on the *Canso d’Antioica*:

³⁷ Giraut in F. Pirot (ed.), *Recherches sur les connaissances littéraires des troubadours occitans et Catalans des XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Barcelona, 1972), pp. 546–62; for Vigeois see P. Botineau, *La Chronique de Geoffroi de Breuil, Prieur de Vigeois*, doctoral thesis (Paris, 1964).

³⁸ Views on the dating have varied from 1150 to near the end of the twelfth century: for a recent dating of 1196–98 see S. M. Cingolani, ‘The *sirventes-ensenhamen* of Guerau de Cabrera: A Proposal for a New Interpretation’, *JHR*, 1 (1992–93), pp. 191–201.

³⁹ *Daurel et Beton*, ed. A. S. Kimmel (Chapel Hill, 1971), pp. 43–6.

⁴⁰ J.-M. d’Heur, ‘Sur la date, la composition et la destination de la *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise* de Guilhem de Tudèle’, in *Mélanges d’histoire littéraire, de linguistique et de philologie romane offerts à Charles Rostaing par ses collègues, ses élèves et ses amis* (Liège, 1974), pp. 231–66.

Senhor, esta canso es feita d'aital guia
 Com sela d'Antiocha et ayssi.s versifia
 E s'a tot aital so, qui diire lo sabia⁴¹

He takes the style, rhyme scheme and tune of the earlier work about the First Crusade for his own account of the Albigensian Crusade. His work and the extant fragment of the *Canso* do indeed share a rhyme scheme, the distinctive six-syllable *vers orphelin* at the end of each *laisse*. His work also contains some verbal reminiscences of the Madrid fragment, although it is dangerous to read too much into these in a formulaic genre like the *chanson de geste*.⁴² What this tells us is that by 1212 there was a distinctive Occitan *chanson de geste* about the First Crusade, identified with/focusing on events at Antioch in particular; it was written in alexandrines with a *vers orphelin*. It does not tell us anything about the content or relationship to any Old French text.

What both these references tell us is that some version of a *chanson de geste* about Antioch was well known in Occitania by the start of the thirteenth century. Tudela's use of it as a model strongly suggests it was Occitan, although Cabrera's reference leaves open the possibility that an Old French version was also known.

References in the *Antioche* itself also point to the last quarter of the twelfth century. Duparc-Quioc locates it precisely in 1177 on a number of grounds: allusions to the *Proverbes au Vilain* composed at that time; two allusions to the shield of Flanders bearing a lion, attested c.1170; repeated criticism of the house of Blois, reflecting enmity between the houses of Blois and Flanders and the less than impressive behaviour of Stephen of Blois' grandson, another Stephen, in Outremer in 1170; a reference to Prester John, a figure of interest in the 1170s; and two references to the Seven Sleepers, of whom an arm was translated to St-Vaast of Arras in 1173. She argues that it should be seen as an excitatorium to crusade in the context of the pilgrimage of Philippe d'Alsace in 1177.⁴³ Cook and Sumberg both place the text in 1180–90.⁴⁴ If we accept these references as pointing to a date

⁴¹ 'My lords, this song is crafted in the same form as the one about Antioch, and has the same verse form, and the same tune for anyone who knows how to sing it' (our translation): *Chanson de la Croisade contre les Albigeois*, ed. E. Martin-Chabot (3 vols, Paris, 1931–60); reprinted with translation by H. Gougaud, *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise* (Paris, 1989); see also J. Shirley (trans.), *The Song of the Cathar Wars* (Aldershot, 2000) [*Crozada*].

⁴² Compare *Crozada* *laisse* 93 and *Canso* v. 577, where there is a near-identical reference to Roncevaux; *Crozada* *laisse* 122 and *Canso* vv. 552–3.

⁴³ Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 132–9.

⁴⁴ L. Sumberg suggests 1192 as the latest possible date, linking the poem to the Third Crusade: *La Chanson d'Antioche: étude historique et littéraire, une chronique en vers français de la première croisade par le Pèlerin Richard* (Paris, 1968), pp. 357–64; Hatem also suggests 1190 (p. 344). Cook dates the central trilogy of the Cycle between 1150 and 1190: 'Les épopées de la croisade', in H. van Dijk and W. Noonan (eds), *Aspects de l'épopée romane: mentalités, idéologies, intertextualités* (Groningen, 1995), pp. 93–110.

in the 1170s, they might be seen as evidence of a version produced at this time fossilised in the current text.

Summary

We have no extant crusade *chanson de geste* in French or Occitan that can be dated to the twelfth century. However, references in Latin chronicles suggest that by the early twelfth century there was some kind of recognised body of material that centred around Antioch and used the conventions of the *chanson de geste* to describe Saracen activities. There is evidence that such a *chanson de geste* existed in Occitania by the start of the thirteenth century, was sufficiently well recognised to serve as a model for the *Crozada* and might in some form date back to the early twelfth century; in parallel Bechada produced a poem in the early twelfth century although there is no evidence this was a *chanson de geste*. Although a number of references in the extant *Antioche* also seem to point towards a late twelfth-century dating, it is unclear whether an Old French equivalent existed. Some form of *chanson de geste* about the Crusade clearly did exist by the end of the twelfth century, and elements of it may be near contemporary with the First Crusade. Interestingly this is not too different from what the *Antioche* itself tells us, namely that an older oral (assonanced?) version was subsequently put into rhyme and written down by an anonymous author.

Sources for the extant *Antioche*: a summarised version of Albert of Aachen, Robert the Monk and a ‘St-Pol text’?

The extant text of the *Antioche* is unusual in that it is a *chanson de geste* that shows close parallels with Latin chronicles.⁴⁵ The first two-thirds of the text show numerous parallels with the *Historia Ierosolymitana* of the Rhineland chronicler Albert of Aachen, the last third with the *Historia Iherosolymitana* of the French chronicler Robert the Monk. In addition there is abundant material on the exploits of the St-Pol family, little of which is preserved elsewhere.

Parallels with Albert of Aachen

Albert’s chronicle is both the fullest account of the Crusade and independent from other accounts: it presents a Lotharingian version of the Crusade with heavy

⁴⁵ Unusual but not unique: *Raoul de Cambrai* shows close similarities to the *Chronique de Waulsort*. See introduction to *Raoul de Cambrai*, ed. and trans. S. Kay (Oxford, 1992); D. Misonne, *Eilbert de Florennes: histoire et légende, la geste de Raoul de Cambrai* (Louvain, 1967).

emphasis on events in Germany and eastern France, and with Godfrey playing a leading role. It is likely to have been completed no later than 1119.⁴⁶ We do not know what Albert's sources were: he says himself that he relied on contemporary and eyewitness testimony and there is little reason to doubt him.⁴⁷

The first two-thirds of the *Antioche* show strong resemblances with Albert of Aachen. Peter's vision and the start of the Crusade are similar in both, although the *Antioche* omits much of Albert's detail and whole sections including, for example the persecution of the Jews in the Rhineland.⁴⁸

Events at Nicaea also show strong parallels with Albert. Both share, for example, the initial assault before camp was established, the sending of Soliman as an envoy to seek help, and the deaths of Baldwin of Ghent, Baldwin Cauderon and Guy of Porsese. A similar list of names is given in both, and the reference to Bernard of Domedart as 'li delitous' is close to Albert's description of Bernard as 'dilectissimus in omni facto et forma delectabilis' ('very pleasing in every deed and delightful to look at').⁴⁹

At Dorylaeum both place the battle in the valley of 'Gorgonie'. Both describe Bohemond splitting off to go foraging, and the concerns of Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Blois about dispersing forces too far. In both a messenger was sent to Godfrey. Soliman fled to the mountains and the description of booty is similar.⁵⁰

Both texts devote attention to the complicated series of events in which Baldwin and Tancred fought over the possession of various Cilician cities and in which Baldwin eventually became count of Edessa in murky circumstances. The *GF* compresses these events, saying only that Tancred gave Tarsus to Baldwin and retained Adana and Mamistra himself. Fulcher of Chartres, who as Baldwin's chaplain could have been expected to have a close knowledge of events, compresses events into one short chapter. By contrast, Albert and the *Antioche* give a detailed account of both episodes, something found elsewhere only in *RC*, albeit there from a different point of view.⁵¹

The parallels continue in events leading up to the taking of Antioch. At Artah both texts refer to Gosson, son of Conon of Montaigu: however in the *Antioche*

⁴⁶ AA, pp. xxiv–v.

⁴⁷ 'ex his aliqua memorie commendare que auditu et relatione nota fierent ab his qui presentes affuissent' (I decided to commend to posterity at least some of the things that were made known to me by listening to those who had been there and to their reports'): pp. 2–3.

⁴⁸ Laisses 15–18, 35–7; AA, pp. 2–9.

⁴⁹ Laisses 48–88. For the initial assault see AA, pp. 92–5; for the three deaths compare laisse 75 and AA, pp. 110–13; for the list of names see laisse 50 and AA, pp. 96–101; for Bernard v. 8129 and AA, pp. 98–9.

⁵⁰ Laisses 89–105. For Gorgonie vv. 1759, 1944, 2003, 2024, 2172 and AA, pp. 128–9; for splitting forces AA, pp. 128–9; for the messenger laisse 98 and AA, pp. 132–3; for Soliman and booty AA, pp. 136–7.

⁵¹ Laisses 106–13; *GF*, pp. 24–5, *FC*, pp. 88–92; *RC*, pp. 57–73; AA, pp. 144–81.

he died in battle, in Albert of illness.⁵² Both have Adhemar's instructions about keeping the forces together.⁵³ The description of the Iron Bridge is the same, as is the release of the prisoners from Civetot; the Turkish survivors alerted Garsion, who prepared for siege.⁵⁴ Both have Taticius at the siege and the burning of a siege engine on the bridge.⁵⁵ They share a long account of the embassy to the sultan of Persia but many of the details are different. Albert refers to another son, Buldagis, being sent before Sansadoine. In Albert Soliman participated in Garsion's council of war; in the *Antioche* he arrived dramatically part way through. The *Antioche* is alone in having the gruesome use of Garsion's beard as a token.⁵⁶ Albert has a long account of a Turkish child taken hostage and released alongside a reference to the son of Antioch's betrayer: the *Antioche* compresses the two into one.⁵⁷

From this point the *Antioche* abandons Albert as its main source. There is only one further parallel: the solo flight of Garsion after the fall of Antioch and the grisly details of his severed head.⁵⁸

The pattern of events and construction of the storyline in the *Antioche* and Albert is the same. There are shared episodes found nowhere else, such as the deaths of the two Baldwins and Guy of Porsese. The same lists of names occur. There is the same emphasis on the heroism of Godfrey. The achievements of the St-Pols and others from north-eastern France are highlighted. The attitude to the Byzantines is positive. Albert refers to Rosseleon as one of the four deputy rulers of Antioch, a clear precursor of the Rouge Lion of the *Antioche*.⁵⁹

However, while the two texts run in parallel, they are not identical. The *Antioche* omits large tracts of material: while this might be explained as reflecting the need to summarise Albert's copious detail, some of the episodes excluded would have sat well in the *Antioche*: for example Godfrey's fight with a bear or the St-Pols protecting Christians foraging.⁶⁰ Even where episodes are shared the details are often different: the *Antioche* telescopes into one the two Turkish child hostages at Antioch, and Gosson of Montaigu dies of illness in Albert but (more heroically) in battle in the *Antioche*.

One explanation for this hit and miss pattern of resemblances is that the two texts share a common lost source. Knoch has argued that such a source lies behind Albert's work.⁶¹ While not impossible, there is no corroborative evidence.

⁵² Laisses 114–15; AA, pp. 186–7.

⁵³ Laisse 124; AA, pp. 190–91.

⁵⁴ Laisse 146 for the bridge; AA, pp. 192–5.

⁵⁵ Laisse 149–50; AA, pp. 200–201 and 202–5.

⁵⁶ Laisses 189–224 for the embassy and its consequences; laisses 191–3 for increasingly gory description of the beard; compare AA, pp. 248–51 and 254–61.

⁵⁷ Laisses 229–32; AA, pp. 224–9 and 272–5.

⁵⁸ Laisses 370–71; AA, pp. 286–7.

⁵⁹ AA, pp. 196–7; 326–7.

⁶⁰ AA, pp. 142–5; 212–15.

⁶¹ P. Knoch, *Studien zu Albert von Aachen* (Stuttgart, 1966).

In our view the resemblance has two sources. Up to a point it can be explained by the fact that Albert and the *Antioche* both draw on earlier *chanson de geste* style material: the ghosts of now lost campfire songs, tales of individual heroism and wild speculation about the Saracen enemy fuelled by popular stereotypes.

But this does not explain the close resemblance of storyline, episode and approach in the two texts. They share a clear and consistent account of events from a north-eastern and Lotharingian perspective. This is marked by an emphasis on the role of Peter the Hermit at the expense of the pope, the leadership of Godfrey and focus on deeds by Godfrey's followers. There is no reason to deny Albert the credit for producing this version of events, based as he says on the accounts of participants. However, it is not the version used by the *Antioche*. Instead it appears to be using a summarised or abstracted version of Albert as the framework of the first two-thirds of the text. Here we are firmly in the realm of surmise. But we know from the growth of legends about the Swan Knight and Godfrey that interest in the Crusade remained strong in the north-east of France and Lotharingia: there would at the least have been a context for the production of such a version.

Parallels with Robert the Monk

Borrowings from Robert begin abruptly at *laisse* 238 with the arrival of Corbaran to besiege Antioch. The arrival of Corbaran, the episode with Calabria, the finding of the Lance and Bohemond's anger over the warriors trapped in the tower are all from Robert in a borrowing stretching over 30 *laissez*, with some material added about Sansadoine. The account of the embassy to Corbaran is Robert's, but with some additions such as Adhemar's suggestion of the embassy and Bohemond's sounding out of morale in the army. Material about the game of chess and the role of Amedelis common with Raymond of Aguilers and Fulcher of Chartres is also added in, as is the episode of Pierre Postel and Eurvin of Creel.⁶²

The account of the battle itself is shaped around three formulaic sets of *laissez*: Adhemar's attempts to persuade each leader in turn to carry the Lance into battle; the marching out of the squadrons; and a set of single combats.⁶³ There is also some unique material, notably the death of Rainald of Toul and the capturing of the standard by Wicher.⁶⁴ Rather than forming the basis for the account, sections of material from Robert are inserted into it: Adhemar's sermon, the Occitan spy, the grass fire, Odo of Beauvais, the intervention of the white forces, and the

⁶² RM, pp. 150–67.

⁶³ *Laissez* 307–14; 315–28; 339–44.

⁶⁴ Rainald *laissez* 333–4; Wicher *laisse* 358.

death of Gerard of Melun.⁶⁵ The final *laissez* of the text describing Bohemond's manoeuvring to consolidate control of Antioch are likewise from Robert.⁶⁶

As with the sections reflecting Albert, the material is close but not identical. The storyline is Robert's, but heavily interspersed with other material. Some passages are the same almost word for word.⁶⁷ Indeed as Duparc-Quioc has pointed out, the *Antioche* even faithfully reproduces mistakes by Robert.⁶⁸ Other passages change details or introduce different details: for example, the *Antioche* inserts an offer of champions' combat into Robert's account of the embassy to Corbaran.⁶⁹ The two sources are therefore used rather differently: the compiler seems to have been working from a source close to rather than identical with Albert's text, whereas his use of Robert is based on the extant text.

It is not surprising that an author needing a source for the Crusade should use Robert. Robert's version of the Crusade, produced in 1106–1107 and closely following the account of the *GF*, was the most popular account by a factor of ten. His work survives in around 100 manuscripts: these are widely spread geographically but show some concentration in Germany and north-eastern France.⁷⁰ So his was the obvious account to choose: a text was likely to be readily available, and his popularity guaranteed *auctoritas*.

What is unclear is why the author should suddenly start to use Robert for the final third of the text and why he should continue to insert other material. One possibility is that Robert's account was seen as more appropriate for the climactic battle than Albert's, emphasising the divine intervention of the white forces: however the patchy use of it suggests otherwise. It is possible that the Albert-based source material simply stopped after the taking of the city: although the final episode of Garsion's flight suggests otherwise, this could have been moved back from its original position.

⁶⁵ Laisse 329 and RM, p. 169; laisse 329 and RM, pp. 168–9; vv.8392–5 and RM, p. 172; laisses 339–40 and RM, p. 171; laisse 358 and RM, pp. 171–2; laisse 360 and RM, pp. 172–3.

⁶⁶ Laisses 371–74; RM, pp. 174–5, much expanded.

⁶⁷ Compare e.g. RM, p. 150 and *Antioche* vv. 6676–81, which is a faithful translation; RM, p. 171 and *Antioche* v. 9064, which both include St Maurice in the holy forces. Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 108–10.

⁶⁸ The Agulani were ferocious Saracen fighters. *GF* says they did not carry swords (p. 49); RM rather puzzlingly renders this as suggesting their horses disapproved of armed riders (p. 150), and *Antioche* v. 6570 follows RM's misapprehension. Similarly *GF* says the emperor retreated to Bulgaria and ordered a scorched earth policy (p. 65); RM skips to the emperor ordering a scorched earth policy in Bulgaria, which makes no sense (pp. 159–60); *Antioche* laisse 287 follows suit. See Duparc-Quioc's comments: *Etude*, p. 108.

⁶⁹ RM, pp. 165–7; *Antioche* laisse 294.

⁷⁰ For dating see RM, pp. 4–7; for ms numbers and dissemination, RM pp. 8–9.

Additional material on the St-Pols: the 'St-Pol text'

The exploits of the St-Pols, overlords of St-Pol-en-Ternois in Picardy, feature largely in the poem. They receive 68 mentions in 9,500 or so lines compared to 42 for Robert of Flanders and 47 for Robert of Normandy; only Bohemond, Tancred and Godfrey are mentioned more. Their heroism is consistently highlighted. Thus on arrival at Antioch Enguerrand finds the crucial ford across the Orontes, and urges the Christians to attack. Hugh is given an exploit during the siege, and plays a leading role in the episode of the child hostage. Enguerrand leads the way to the palace when Antioch falls and raises Bohemond's banner to symbolise the taking of the city. They are given their own column in the battle and their heroism picked out.⁷¹

However, this prominence is not reflected in contemporary accounts of the Crusade. The St-Pols are given one major exploit by Albert.⁷² Otherwise Hugh is mentioned once in RC (as 'count of St-Pol'); Enguerrand is mentioned in addition in RA as the subject of a posthumous vision: he never reached Jerusalem, dying of illness at Ma'arrat.⁷³ It is of course possible that they played a larger role than preserved in any account, and that their exploits could have been remembered a century later even though not recorded.⁷⁴ But it is hard to believe they could have had anything like the prominence they are given in the *Antioche* and yet be virtually ignored by the contemporary chroniclers.

We cannot say for certain how much is poetic embellishment and how much a genuine family memory of achievements. We know that such memories could be preserved for generations and might for example be used as sermon illustrations.⁷⁵ So it is quite possible that a kernel of truth about Hugh and Enguerrand lies beneath the poetic exaggeration. It is also quite possible that some of this goes back to the early traditions of the Crusade preserved in Albert: the extant *Antioche* may have been continuing and embroidering a legend which already existed.⁷⁶

However, the sheer amount of material suggests that some kind of text was commissioned at some point by the St-Pol family as a means of reflecting glory on

⁷¹ Laisses 119; 158; 230; 259; 321–2; 352.

⁷² AA, pp. 212–15.

⁷³ RC, p. 74; RA, p. 89 and AA, pp. 374–7 for Enguerrand.

⁷⁴ See E. van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe 900–1200* (Toronto, 1999), for discussion of how memory would preserve family traditions and exploits for a century and more.

⁷⁵ Compare a late fifteenth-/early sixteenth-century document drawn up to remind preachers of facts relevant to the Las Tours family to use in sermons: A. Thomas, 'Le roman de Goufier de Lastours', *R*, 34 (1905), pp. 55–65.

⁷⁶ See William of Tyre [WT], vol. 1, p. 272 for comments on the survival of collective memory: *A History of Deeds Done Beyond The Sea*, trans. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey (2 vols, New York, 1943).

the family.⁷⁷ We suggest it was based on a summary of Albert of Aachen and on the chronicle of Robert the Monk, with additional material from family reminiscences and legends. Conjecturally this text was used as a basis for the extant *Antioche*. We do not know at what point this text – the ‘St-Pol text’ – might have been written. We suggest, though, that the events of a century ago took on a new interest and urgency c.1200 that led to the commissioning of a new version of the *Chanson d’Antioche*.

Picardy in 1200, where the St-Pol lands lay, was a society in transition. Politically it was sandwiched between France and England. Socially this created a sense of insecurity as past certainties changed. The natural reaction was to look back to the glories of the past as a comfort and a means of self-affirmation.⁷⁸ One of the manifestations of this was a strengthened interest in genealogy, the family as tangible link between the past and the present. The region produced ‘a surprising number of genealogies and genealogical histories of lay figures’.⁷⁹ Baldwin of Flanders, for example, dispatched clerks throughout Europe to discover the truth about the links between Charlemagne and his own ancestors.⁸⁰ Another and linked effect was that the deeds of ancestors assumed disproportionate importance. Lambert of Ardres, for example, fulminated about the supposed omission of Arnold of Guines from an account of the First Crusade and invented a highly unlikely excuse: that Arnold had failed to give the jongleur recording the events a pair of scarlet shoes, and been left out as a punishment.⁸¹

These trends came together in a new interest in history which was to lead to the creation of a new form: history written not in Latin or in French verse, but in French prose. Rather like Anglo-Norman England a century before, a need to affirm position in the face of uncertainty created a surge of interest in genealogy ‘to revive lost dreams of glory, to vindicate motives and to mantle the discomfort

⁷⁷ See S. Duparc-Quioç, ‘Recherches sur l’origine des poèmes épiques de Croisade et sur leur utilisation éventuelle par les grandes familles féodales’, *Atti del convegno internazionale sul tema: la poesia epica e la sua formazione* (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1970), pp. 771–92, for the connection between the *Antioche* and the St-Pols.

⁷⁸ G. Duby, *Le dimanche de Bouvines: 27 juillet 1214* (Paris, 1973); G. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-century France* (Berkeley, CA, 1993).

⁷⁹ *The History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres: Lambert of Ardres*, trans. L. Shopkow (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 22.

⁸⁰ Spiegel, pp. 70–73.

⁸¹ Lambert of Ardres, *Chronique de Guines et d’Ardres*, ed. G. Méniglaize (Paris, 1855), pp. 311–13; trans. Shopkow, pp. 164–6. Duparc-Quioç takes this as evidence of Richard’s existence (*Etude*, p. 145). It is more likely to reflect the criticism *jongleurs* attracted as unreliable sources: see P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 101–2.

that the contemplation of unwanted and adverse historical change germinated.⁸² This in turn generated a need for texts seen as accessible and reliable in 'un bouillonnement creative où s'essayent diverses formes.'⁸³ The starting point was six translations of the Pseudo-Turpin in the first decade or so of the century, the first commissioned by none other than Yolande of St-Pol.⁸⁴ It was not long before the new medium was also being used to portray contemporary events in the form of the accounts of the Fourth Crusade by Clari and Villehardouin, both of whom came from the same area of north-eastern France as the St-Pols.⁸⁵ These texts still bore the marks of their *chanson de geste* predecessors in language and formula. But they came with the added *auctoritas* of prose and of eyewitness testimony.⁸⁶

The theme of crusade runs through all these developments. The First Crusade was used as an *exemplum*: Lambert of Ardes describes how Arnaut II de Guines whiled away a wet Picard day listening to stories about Arthur, Charlemagne, Tristan and Isolde, his own genealogy and the First Crusade. Bodel's *Jeu de St Nicolas* portrays the themes of the Crusade.⁸⁷

Arguably the stimulus for this interest was the Fourth Crusade: 'there can be little serious doubt ... of the topicality of the imminent Fourth Crusade in Arras at the turn of the century.'⁸⁸ The Crusade was a major enterprise for Picardy. Baldwin of Flanders led one of the main contingents and was later to become emperor of Constantinople. Many of the crusaders were from Flanders and Artois.⁸⁹ Robert de Clari produced a unique personal account of his experiences. The glorious example of the First Crusade acquired a new relevance both as an inspiration

⁸² Spiegel, p. 1. Cf. J. Blacker: 'the Norman Conquest ... precipitated among the native English the need to document property rights and among the new rulers the desire to explain their new blended heritage to themselves and to justify their supremacy to those they had conquered': *The Faces of Time: Portrayal of the Past in Old French and Latin Historical Narrative of the Anglo-Norman Regnum* (Austin, TX, 1994), p. xii.

⁸³ For Arras in the thirteenth century see M. Gally, 'Poésie en jeu: des jeux-partis aux fatrasies', in M-M. Castellani and J-P. Martin (eds), *Arras au Moyen Age: histoire et littérature* (Arras, 1994), pp. 71–80.

⁸⁴ Spiegel: pp. 70–73 for Baldwin; p. 70 for Yolande.

⁸⁵ Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans. P. Noble (Edinburgh, 2005); Geoffroi de Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral (2 vols, Paris, 1961).

⁸⁶ P. F. Dembowski, *La Chronique de Robert de Clari: étude de la langue et du style* (Toronto, 1963); J. Dufournet, *Les écrivains de la IV^e croisade* (2 vols, Paris, 1973).

⁸⁷ Lambert of Ardes, p. 217 and trans. Shopkow, p. 130; Jehan Bodel, *Le Jeu de St Nicolas*, ed. A. Henry (Geneva, 1981).

⁸⁸ D. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades* (Geneva, 1988), p. 234.

⁸⁹ For the Fourth Crusade see D. E. Queller and T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia, 1997), and J. Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London, 2005). On participants see J. Longnon, *Les Compagnons de Villehardouin: recherches sur les croisés de la quatrième croisade* (Geneva, 1978).

to set out on a new crusade and as a comforting memory to set against later disillusionment following events in Constantinople. The prologue to the *Antioche* certainly suggests an exhortatory function.⁹⁰

The St-Pol family, in particular, was central to the Fourth Crusade. Hugh IV was one of the main leaders: 'il fut considéré comme un des chefs de la croisade, au meme titre que les comtes de Flandre et de Blois.'⁹¹ For example he took a leading role in negotiations, accompanying Villehardouin on his mission to ensure that the count of Blois remained committed to the Crusade. He led in battle after battle, commanding the third battalion in the attack on the Golden Horn and the second battalion in fighting off the emperor's counter-attack at Constantinople. He carried Baldwin's sword at the coronation in Hagia Sophia. His reward was to become lord of Demotica until his death in 1205.⁹²

What more natural, then, than for the St-Pol family of c.1200, already commissioning a translation of pseudo-Turpin and playing a leading role in the Fourth Crusade, to want to emphasise the heroism of their ancestors on the First Crusade?

We do not know what form this St-Pol text might have taken. It could have been either in Latin or the vernacular, although we suggest the latter given the commissioning of other vernacular works at the same time. It could, like the translations of the pseudo-Turpin, have been in prose. Or it could have been in verse. We do not know whether it was a *chanson de geste*. Its existence, however, might owe much to the preceding epic tradition.

It could be argued that there is no evidence such a text ever existed independently of the Cycle: in other words, why postulate a separate St-Pol predecessor version rather than accept the extant *Antioche* as the St-Pol commission? Two factors point to the existence of a separate and earlier text. The first is that borrowings from Albert and Robert are confined to the *Antioche*: there is no evidence of similar borrowing in the *Jérusalem* and *Chétifs* even though both chroniclers would have provided abundant material. This suggests that the *Antioche* has a different authorial history. The second is that the St-Pols are far less prominent in the *Jérusalem* and (unsurprisingly since they were not taken captive at Civetot) the *Chétifs*.⁹³ Enguerrand de St-Pol died of illness at Ma'arrat in 1098: he never made it to Jerusalem.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ See e.g. *laisse* 6.

⁹¹ Longnon, p. 195.

⁹² Longnon, pp. 195–7; Queller and Madden, pp. 47, 52, 115, 123, 126–8, 175, 202. For his elevation to lord of Demotica see K.M. Setton et al. (eds), *A History of the Crusades*, 2nd edn (6 vols, Madison, WI, 1969–89), vol. 2, *The Later Crusades, 1189–1311*, ed. R. Wolff and H. W. Hazard, p. 192.

⁹³ Their only significant role in the *Jérusalem* is Enguerrand's death at the battle of Ascalon and his subsequent avenging by his father: *laisse*s 242–5, 273. They appear in passing in one manuscript of the *Chétifs* at B73 and 3673.

⁹⁴ RA, p. 89; AA, p. 377.

We therefore conclude that the St-Pol family commissioned some kind of text, probably vernacular, at the start of the thirteenth century. It used a version of Albert's chronicle, which originated in Lotharingia, and completed the story using the well-known account by Robert. It added in abundant material on the exploits of the St-Pol family, which is likely to have come from family tradition and memory. We suggest that this text provides the substructure on which the *Antioche* was built.

How 'Graindor' turned this material into the nucleus of the Old French Crusade Cycle

We have argued above that material preceding the *Antioche* existed throughout the twelfth century. However, the *Antioche* is not found apart from the Cycle in any of the extant manuscripts, and none of the manuscripts pre-dates the thirteenth century. In this section we argue that the extant version was created at some point in the first half of the thirteenth century drawing heavily on the 'St-Pol text' by a compiler or compilers – 'Graindor' – who made two major innovations. He or they adopted and recast *chanson de geste* elements of the text: we examine this in detail in chapter 3. And he or they incorporated it into a whole cycle of chansons de geste, perhaps drawing on the memory of shadowy earlier texts. The *Antioche* became the basis for a trilogy with the *Chétifs* and the *Jérusalem* that would in turn develop into a whole cycle recounting the prehistory and post-history of the crusade: the Old French Crusade Cycle. Around a third of the material in the extant *Antioche* reflects this recasting.

The Old French Crusade Cycle

The OFCC comprises a series of texts that in its fullest form takes the story of the Crusade from the ancestry of Godfrey to the time of Saladin.⁹⁵ The texts fall broadly into three groups: the central Crusade trilogy of *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem*; the Godfrey texts; and the continuations after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 that are preserved in various combinations in four manuscripts.

The nucleus of the Cycle is generally considered to be the Crusade trilogy comprising the *Antioche*, the *Chanson des Chétifs* and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*.⁹⁶ The three texts together narrate the events of the First Crusade from its beginnings with Peter the Hermit to the battle of Ascalon, with a flashback to Civetot and the

⁹⁵ The entire Cycle has been edited in the monumental Alabama edition overseen by Nelson and Mickel. For an overview see E. J. Mickel, 'Writing the record: the OFCC', in Bennett et al (eds), *Epic and Crusade*, pp. 39–64.

⁹⁶ *Les Chétifs*, ed. G. Myers, Crusade Cycle V (1981); *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, ed. N. R. Thorp, Crusade Cycle VI (1992).

fate of Peter's followers in the middle. They are linked by a storyline centred on Corbaran's fall from favour with the sultan of Persia and the subsequent help he receives from the crusaders.

Godfrey does not play a dominant role in the Crusade trilogy. However he was soon to be transformed into the protagonist of the entire Cycle through the addition of a number of texts setting out his ancestry and childhood: the *Naissance* (in two versions known as the *Elioxe* and the *Béatrice*), the *Chevalier au Cygne*, the *Fin d'Elias*, the *Enfances Godefroi*, and the *Retour de Cornumarant*.⁹⁷ The source material, like the predecessors of the *Antioche* itself, was known in the last decade or so of the twelfth century: it is referred to by William of Tyre in the 1170s, by Geoffrey of Auxerre in 1187–88 and by Ambroise in his *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*.⁹⁸ However, we cannot date the composition of the texts based on it more accurately than the first half of the thirteenth century.⁹⁹ There are two references to an otherwise shadowy author Renaus, who may have been the mastermind behind this section of the Cycle.¹⁰⁰ While the Godfrey texts have their own internal logic, they are only loosely connected to the central Crusade trilogy: Mickel suggests that the *Enfances* acts as a bridge to the crusade from the folkloric and romance themes reflected in the *Chevalier au Cygne*, with Calabra's prophecies forming the link.¹⁰¹ The central trilogy itself was not retrospectively edited to give Godfrey greater prominence.¹⁰²

Four manuscripts of the Cycle also preserve a set of texts known as the continuations: these comprise the *Chrétienté Corbaran*, *Prise d'Acre*, the *Mort Godefroi* and the *Chanson des Rois Baudouin* plus continuations taking the story

⁹⁷ *La Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne: Elioxe*, ed. E. J. Mickel and *Béatrice*, ed. J. A. Nelson, Crusade Cycle I (1977); *Le Chevalier au Cygne* and *La Fin d'Elias*, ed. J. A. Nelson, Crusade Cycle II (1985); *Les Enfances Godefroi* and *Le Retour de Cornumarant*, ed. E. J. Mickel, Crusade Cycle III (1999).

⁹⁸ WT IX.6: 'I purposely omit the story of the swan whence legend declares these brothers derived their origin, because, although many writers give that as true, it seems to be without foundation', trans. p. 388. For Geoffrey of Auxerre see F. Gastaldelli, 'Una sconosciuta redazione latina della Chanson du Chevalier au Cygne nel commento all'Apocalisse di Goffredo d'Auxerre', *A*, 42 (1968), pp. 491–501; Ambroise, *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, trans. M. J. Ailes and M. Barber (Woodbridge, 2003), vv. 8497–9.

⁹⁹ All manuscripts except H date from between the mid-thirteenth and the first quarter of the fourteenth century: *Naissance*, Introduction, p. xxiii.

¹⁰⁰ *Enfances* v. 2412, and *Retour de Cornumarant* v. 1487.

¹⁰¹ See E. J. Mickel, 'The *Enfances Godefroi*: An Epic in Formation', *R*, 117 (1999), pp. 98–114; 'Cyclical Formation: BNF fr.786 of the *Enfances Godefroi*', *R*, 118 (2000), pp. 529–41; 'The *Enfances Godefroi*: the making of popular history', *R*, 116 (1998), pp. 148–69.

¹⁰² Nelson, *Le Chevalier au Cygne*, p. xxvi: 'The Swan Knight cycle remains relatively disjointed and ununified in the OFCC.'

of the crusades as far as Saladin.¹⁰³ They survive in two versions: the earlier is tentatively dated to the second half of the thirteenth century by its editor, the later to around 1300.¹⁰⁴ Insofar as any source can be identified, they are based on the chronicle of Ernoul.¹⁰⁵ Grillo suggests that by this stage verse chronicle had become 'an essentially unattractive generic backwater'.¹⁰⁶ Again the texts are at best loosely connected to the rest of the Cycle: the *Chrétienté* picks up the theme of Corbaran's conversion from the *Chétifs* and Godfrey is prominent until his death, but in general this part of the Cycle 'appears to have evolved rapidly ... and never came under the control of a single supervisor with talents matching those of Graindor de Douai'.¹⁰⁷

The narrative of the central Crusade trilogy

It is hard to dispute Duparc-Quioç's view that the extant *Antioche* forms part of a trilogy at the heart of the Cycle along with the *Chétifs* and the *Jérusalem*.¹⁰⁸ A coherent storyline runs through all three centred around the relationship between Corbaran and the sultan of Persia and culminating in the Christians' triumphant capture and defence of Jerusalem: 'la pierre sur laquelle les trois chansons fondent leur unité, nous autorisant ainsi à définir un "cycle de Jérusalem"'.¹⁰⁹

The *Antioche* begins with a very detailed account of Christian defeat at the battle of Civetot. Several of the Christians were taken captive: Richard of Caumont, Baldwin of Beauvais and Harpin of Bourges chief among them. These formed the band known as the 'chétifs'. The *Antioche* is at some pains to stress that it has the 'vrai commencement' to its story in the form of Peter the Hermit's vision and the defeat of the 'chétifs'.¹¹⁰ After recounting events at Nicaea and Dorylaeum, the remaining two-thirds of the text focus on the siege and battle of Antioch and the need to defeat the Turkish general Corbaran. The sultan of Persia entrusts his son

¹⁰³ *The Jérusalem Continuations: Part I, La Chrétienté Corbaran*, ed. P. R. Grillo (1984); *Part II: La Prise d'Acre, La Mort Godefroi and La Chanson des Rois Baudouin*, ed. P. R. Grillo (1987); *Crusade Cycle VII; The Jérusalem Continuations: the London-Turin version*, ed. P. R. Grillo (1994), *Crusade Cycle VIII*. Each of the manuscripts in which these are preserved has a different selection of texts; the fullest set is in B.N. 12569.

¹⁰⁴ Grillo, *Continuations II*, p. xxxv; *London/Turin*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁵ Grillo, *Continuations II*, p. xxx.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xxii

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xv.

¹⁰⁸ S. Duparc-Quioç, *Le Cycle de la Croisade* (Paris, 1955), pp. 69–74.

¹⁰⁹ P. Péron, *Les croisés en orient: la représentation de l'espace dans le cycle de la croisade* (Paris, 2008), p. 553.

¹¹⁰ At v.13. It is not entirely clear whether the 'vrai commencement' refers to the theme of the vengeance of Christ set out in detail in the prologue, to Peter's Crusade and the subsequent captivity of the 'chétifs', or both.

Brohadas to Corbaran, to be guarded on pain of death. However, Brohadas is killed at the battle of Antioch, his death receiving considerable attention in the text. This leaves Corbaran in severe trouble with the sultan at the end of the *Antioche*: not only had he been defeated, but he was responsible for the death of the sultan's heir.

The three episodes of the *Chanson des Chétifs* that follow describe how the 'chétifs' restored Corbaran's position. Richard of Caumont fought a judicial duel on his behalf; Baldwin of Beauvais freed his land from a three-headed serpent; and Harpin of Bourges saved his nephew from being kidnapped by a monkey. Corbaran ended the *Chétifs* the best of friends with his captives, and released them to go to Jerusalem for the climax of the Crusade.

The start of the *Chanson de Jérusalem* shows their return to the Crusade, where their first activity is to win a skirmish. The *Jérusalem* then goes on to portray events at Jerusalem as a rerun of events at Antioch: the siege of Jerusalem corresponds to the siege of Antioch and the battle of Ascalon to the battle of Antioch. The 'chétifs' drop out of sight for the body of the poem, reappearing only as part of the forces in the battle of Ascalon. Their participation in the Crusade redeems not only their own honour, but that of the Crusade more generally: the one defeat suffered at Civetot is comprehensively reversed.

The *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem* are similar lengths and relate to historical events, albeit in highly fictionalised form (particularly the latter): the *Chétifs* is much shorter, forming a bridge between the two and, we may speculate, providing some light relief.¹¹¹ The three texts clearly function as a unity. They share characters: the soldiers of the *Antioche* reappear in the *Chétifs*, the Tafur King from the *Antioche* plays a major role in the *Jérusalem* and Eurvin de Creel and Raimbaut Creton are given vignettes in both the *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem*.¹¹² The storylines mirror each other: in the *Jérusalem* the bishop of Mautran plays a similar role to the bishop of Le Puy in the *Antioche*, and Cornumarant seeks help from the sultan in the same way as Sansadoine. They cross-refer: the *Chétifs* contains a reprise of the action in the *Antioche*, and Godfrey's 'coup épique' in the *Antioche* is referred to in the *Jérusalem*.¹¹³ Themes recur consistently, for example (with wearisome regularity) women bringing water for soldiers to drink in battle,

¹¹¹ Duparc-Quioic's edition of the *Antioche* has 9582 lines; the *Jérusalem* ed. Thorp has 9891. The *Chétifs* has 4101.

¹¹² *Chétifs* vv. 475–80, 3864–72 for combatants familiar from the *Antioche*; *Jérusalem* vv. 3010–39 for the Tafur king leading a squadron and vv. 4792–8 for his opening the gates of Jerusalem; *Antioche* laisse 303 for Eurvin and lisses 167–9 for Raimbaut, *Jérusalem* vv. 3561–774 for the reappearance of Eurvin and Raimbaut.

¹¹³ *Chétifs* vv. 211–20 and vv. 735–49 for events at Antioch; *Jérusalem* vv. 7145–7 for reference to the 'coup épique' described at *Antioche* laisse 161.

the placing on battle of a Friday, and the fabulous Saracen tent.¹¹⁴ All three texts are underpinned by the vengeance theme.¹¹⁵

Joins and inconsistencies are, however, more evident in the trilogy than the above description might suggest. The St-Pols are far less dominant after Antioch, their only substantive appearance in the *Jérusalem* being at the battle of Ascalon. The 'chétifs' largely disappear once they reach Jerusalem despite their heroic feats in converting Corbaran. The northern French baron Thomas of Marle is a key character in the *Jérusalem* despite featuring only in passing in the *Antioche*.¹¹⁶

How the central Crusade trilogy might have been compiled

We have argued above that the compiler – 'Graindor' – had two kinds of material at his disposal to create the *Antioche*: some kind of murkily attested preceding epic tradition, and an account of the Crusade based on Albert and Robert commissioned by the St-Pol family, the 'St-Pol text'. We suggest that he recast the latter drawing on the former to create the extant *Antioche*, which became the nucleus of the OFCC.

There is little evidence to suggest an equivalent ur-*Jérusalem*, and no external references to such a text.¹¹⁷ For the *Jérusalem* the compiler(s) therefore created a close copy of the *Antioche*. The *Jérusalem* is almost exactly the same length as the *Antioche* and follows the same structure, with the siege of Jerusalem paralleling the siege of Antioch and the battle of Ascalon the battle of Antioch; it has with some justice been described as 'une copie ... parfois servile' of the *Antioche*.¹¹⁸ It is in places wildly unhistorical: Baldwin and Bohemond are both shown at the siege of Jerusalem although they were not there in reality, and Enguerrand of St-Pol is shown dying in battle at Ascalon when he had already in fact died

¹¹⁴ *Antioche* laisses 99, 353 and *Jérusalem* vv. 260–66, 301, 586, 3310–12, 3486–8, 4570–78 for water carrying; *Chétifs* vv. 719 for Richard of Caumont's battle on Friday; *Antioche* laisse 201 and *Jérusalem* vv. 6088–172 for tents, *Antioche* laisse 201 and *Jérusalem* vv. 6158–9 for airborne image of Mohammed.

¹¹⁵ *Antioche* laisses 8–14; *Chétifs* vv. 700–713; *Jérusalem* vv. 1383–9, 1652–3.

¹¹⁶ He is mentioned 10 times in the *Antioche*: during the sieges of Nicaea and Antioch, climbing into Antioch and in the final battle. See Duparc-Quioc, *Edition*, p. 569.

¹¹⁷ For discussion of whether the thirteenth-century Spanish compilation the *Gran Conquista de Ultramar* contains vestiges of an earlier *Jérusalem* see Duparc-Quioc, 'La Chanson de Jérusalem et la Gran Conquista de Ultramar', *R*, 66 (1940), pp. 32–48; N. R. Thorp, 'La Gran Conquista de Ultramar et les origines de la Chanson de Jérusalem', in K.-H. Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade: Premier colloque international (Trèves, 6–11 août 1984)*, ZFSL – Beiheft 11 (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 76–85. There is no doubt that the *Gran Conquista* preserves material not in our *Jérusalem*: the problem is the lack of evidence to ascribe it to an earlier – as opposed to different – version.

¹¹⁸ Hatem, *Les poèmes*, p. 269.

of illness at Ma'arrat.¹¹⁹ As in the *Antioche*, fact takes second place to literary construction. However, there is a recognisable factual sub-structure, for example in the disposition of the forces at Jerusalem.¹²⁰ The emphasis on Thomas of Marle may reflect now lost family stories.¹²¹ There are a few shreds of unique material such as the names of the engineers who built the siege engines at Jerusalem.¹²² This suggests that the compiler combined a general memory of events with the structure of the *Antioche*, adding references on occasion from unwritten or now lost popular tradition. It is interesting that there appears to have been no epic tradition on Jerusalem compared to the abundant material on Antioch.

Perhaps obviously, the compiler had little choice but to complete his story of the First Crusade with the conquest of Jerusalem. He did, however, have more latitude for the episodic series of skirmishes and sieges between Antioch and Jerusalem. This was an awkward time for the Crusade: there were serious differences of view, particularly between Raymond IV and Bohemond, and the leaders split off to undertake individual sieges. The clear sense of purpose that had brought the Crusade as far as Antioch was dissipated amidst some less than heroic behaviour.¹²³ It was not promising material for a crusade epic and there is no convincing evidence of any poetic predecessor. The author was therefore faced with an awkward hiatus in his narrative.

The manuscripts containing the *version ancienne* of the *Antioche* contain one solution to this in the form of the twelve *laissez* (fourteen in some manuscripts) known as the 'douze couplets' or twelve strophes.¹²⁴ These are a baldly told version of events between Antioch and Jerusalem covering some 200 lines. It has been argued that they represent an earlier poetic version on the grounds that they are assonanced rather than rhymed.¹²⁵ However, the fact that they are alexandrines

¹¹⁹ *Jérusalem* vv. 9688–730, 9778–9.

¹²⁰ N. Thorp, 'La *Chanson de Jérusalem* and the Latin Chronicles', in Bennett et al (eds), *Epic and Crusade*, pp. 153–71; see 159–61 for comments on accuracy of siege disposition.

¹²¹ Duparc-Quioic, *Cycle*, pp. 18–30.

¹²² *Jérusalem* vv. 1895–7, 2194–5, 3375–92, 4422–3: they are called Nicolas and Grégoire and, interestingly, are from Arras. 'Unique' does not, however, mean accurate or authentic.

¹²³ T. Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (London, 2004), p. 241: 'the entire expedition stalled, fragmented and was almost dissolved.' See also J. France, 'The Crisis of the First Crusade: from the defeat of Kerbogha to the departure from Arqa', *B*, 40 (1970), pp. 276–308.

¹²⁴ The *laissez* appear in full in mss A, B and C and in part in mss. D and E. We translate them at the end of the main poem. See below for discussion of the different versions categorised by Duparc-Quioic. The twelve strophes have long been known as the 'douze couplets', and for consistency we have called them the twelve couplets even though they are not actual couplets.

¹²⁵ *La Chanson d'Antioche*, ed. Paulin Paris (Paris, 1848), pp. lii–iii.

rather than decasyllabics argues against them being an early link passage, much less the 'brouillon' of Richard le Pèlerin.¹²⁶ It is hard to see them as anything but a link passage of indeterminate date by an author trying to fill an awkward gap.¹²⁷

The compiler could have used Robert and Albert for source material as he had for the *Antioche*. Instead he came up with an original solution to this narrative hiatus: to insert the *Chanson des Chétifs* as a way of bridging the gap. The narrative is rewound to 1096–97 with the captivity of the 'chétifs'; the geographical focus is shifted hundreds of miles east to Sarmazane and Olierne; and the principal characters of the Crusade are replaced by Corbaran and the 'chétifs'. The guiding theme of the three loosely linked episodes is the increasing dependence of Corbaran on the Christians as they win victories for him in three contexts: legal, spiritual and familial. By the end of the text Corbaran is on the brink of conversion to Christianity.¹²⁸ This has a dual purpose in the mythology of the Cycle. Corbaran, the arch-opponent, is not only defeated but converted. And the shame of Christian captivity is resoundingly wiped out as the Christians come to dominate their captor. The way is clear to ultimate victory in Jerusalem. In Péron's phrase, the *Chétifs* is a 'mise en oeuvre symbolique de la Croisade'.¹²⁹

It is not clear where the source material of the *Chétifs* came from. There is no evidence to link the text to the experiences of William IX of Aquitaine in 1101 and he is strangely absent if he did indeed write the text.¹³⁰ The source of the first episode on Richard of Caumont is unknown, although some memory of Stephen of Caumont (who accompanied William IX in 1101) may lie behind it.¹³¹ The second episode may have originated in Syria and more precisely Antioch. It contains a detailed reference suggesting that the text was written by a canon of St Peter's in Antioch for Raymond of Poitiers, and subsequently passed on to the Patriarch of Antioch.¹³² This would date it no later than 1149 and give it an eastern origin, the assumption being that it would then have made its way to the west and eventually been incorporated in the Cycle. This theory is supported by alleged parallels to the

¹²⁶ Sumberg, *Chanson d'Antioche*, p. 327. On the date of the emergence of the alexandrine see K. Togeby, 'Histoire de l'alexandrin français', in P. Nyberg and H. Sorenson (eds), *Etudes romanes dédiées à Andreas Blikenberg à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire* (Copenhagen, 1963), pp. 240–66.

¹²⁷ Duparc-Quioç, *Etude*, pp. 235–42.

¹²⁸ *Jérusalem* vv. 2764–9, 2933–41: his main concern is what his mother will say.

¹²⁹ Péron, pp. 401–76, esp. 476.

¹³⁰ P. Paris, *Nouvelles Etudes sur La Chanson d'Antioche* (Paris, 1878), pp. 18–20.

¹³¹ Riley-Smith tentatively identifies him as Richard of Chaumont-en-Vexin, brother of Hugh's brother-in-law Walo who died during the Crusade: *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 231, 240. See also G. M. Myers, 'Les Chétifs: étude sur le développement de la chanson', *R*, 105 (1984), pp. 79–83.

¹³² *Chétifs* vv. 1663–78, 1773–80.

Byzantine epic text *Digenis Akritas*, which was fashionable in 1140s Byzantium.¹³³ There is no particular reason to disbelieve all this, but neither is there any reason to think it applies to more than the central Baldwin text; vv.1676–82 suggest as much. The third episode concerns Harpin of Bourges, a well-known figure of the crusade whose history is recounted at some length by Orderic Vitalis: possibly his name was annexed to a folkloric theme.¹³⁴ Myers suggests that the figures of Jean d'Alie and the abbé de Fécamp may refer to an eleventh-century abbot of Fécamp.¹³⁵

Overall the *Chétifs* makes little sense as a free-standing text but entire sense in the context of the Cycle. This suggests that the three episodes might have been brought together specifically by the compiler to bridge a difficult part of his narrative.¹³⁶ Captivity was an ever-present preoccupation, and it is not surprising that it should form a key theme in the Cycle.¹³⁷

¹³³ Hatem, *Les poèmes*, pp. 375–94; R. Goossens, 'Les recherches récentes sur l'épopée Byzantine', *AC*, 2 (1933), pp. 449–72; U. T. Holmes and W. M. McLeod, 'Source problems of the *Chétifs*: a Crusade chanson de geste', *RR*, 28 (1937), pp. 99–108; P. Bancourt, 'Etude de quelques motifs communs à l'épopée Byzantine de *Digenis Akritas* et à la *Chanson d'Aiol*', *R*, 92 (1974), pp. 508–32; *Digenis Akritas: the Grottaferrata and Escorial versions*, ed. and trans. E. Jeffreys (Cambridge, 1998), pp. lvi–lvii.

¹³⁴ According to OV, Harpin was taken captive in the Holy Land whilst helping fight off the emir of Egypt and held in Cairo. He was released after the personal intervention of the Byzantine emperor. He returned to Europe via Rome, where his meeting with Pope Paschal persuaded him to become a monk at Cluny (pp. 350–53). For folklore on abduction by monkeys see S. Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* (6 vols, Bloomington, IN, 1955–58): Index R13.1.7.

¹³⁵ Myers, 'Les *Chétifs*: étude', pp. 63–87, 76–87 for this and other identifications of the heroes of the *Chétifs*.

¹³⁶ Cahen also argues a combination of sources: 'Le Premier Cycle de la Croisade: notes brèves à propos d'un livre (récent?)', *MA*, 63 (1957), pp. 311–28. Myers suggests that the Baudouin episode was added later to the original two: 'Le développement des *Chétifs*: la version fécampoise?' in Karl-Heinz Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade*, pp. 84–90. It has been argued by Duparc-Quioç (*Cycle*, p. 84) that the *Chrétienté Corbaran* represents a second half of the *Chétifs* by the same author: Corbaran's conversion, strongly hinted at in the *Chétifs*, becomes reality. However the *Chrétienté* is found only in the three manuscripts that preserve the continuations and never alongside the *Chétifs* itself. The main characters Baldwin of Beauvais and Richard of Caumont are absent. And it would not have been hard for a later editor to pick up the central theme as argued by Myers ('Les *Chétifs*: étude', pp. 74–5). So there is no obvious reason to see the *Chrétienté* as originating separately from the continuation texts which it accompanies. See P. R. Grillo, 'Les redactions de la *Chrétienté Corbaran*, première branche des continuations du Cycle de la Croisade', *Au Carrefour des routes d'Europe: la chanson de geste. Xe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, Strasbourg 1985* (Aix-en-Provence, 1987), pp. 585–600.

¹³⁷ 'It is no coincidence that captivity forms one of the principal literary themes in the epic poetry inspired by the First Crusade': A.V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: a dynastic history 1099–1115* (Oxford, 2000), p. 109. On captivity in

The 'twelve couplets' and the *Chétifs* thus form two very different linkages between the *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem*. In the absence of firm evidence, one might surmise that the 'twelve couplets' were supplied at some point by a different author who was dissatisfied with the fictional linkage and sought something more factual to fill the gap.

In sum, we suggest the central Crusade trilogy was produced as follows. The compiler(s) started with a text produced for the St-Pols. This was rewritten extensively to transform it into a cyclic *chanson de geste*, reflecting the existence of an older *chanson de geste* tradition. The compiler(s) either did not have or did not like a similar version of events at Jerusalem, producing instead a version heavily based on events at Antioch. The events between Antioch and Jerusalem presented a problem: they were something of an anticlimax and lacked a clear narrative line. The compiler(s) filled this gap with a compilation of existing fantasy material that together formed the *Chétifs*. The three texts were thus welded into an ambitious narrative conception with a coherent storyline and shared characters and themes, bringing together disparate source material.

Material in the *Antioche* reflecting the compilation

Around a third of the material in the *Antioche* reflects the additions and changes needed to turn the source material into a coherent *chanson de geste* forming part of the central trilogy. There are three main additions: the vengeance theme and 'vrai commencement' at the start of the text; the narrative links forward to the *Chétifs* and *Jérusalem*; and internal links and repetitions.

The first 14 laisses act as introduction, constituting the 'vrai commencement' of the text with the theme of the vengeance of Christ which drives the whole Crusade and Peter the Hermit's vision of the Holy Sepulchre. The poem is insistent both that this is the true beginning and that it has been derived from not one but two earlier works. There are a number of possible reasons for this emphasis. The theme of the Crusade as vengeance for the sufferings of Christ was central to crusade propaganda, particularly by the end of the twelfth century: the prologue is clear that the text is an exhortation to crusade.¹³⁸ Peter the Hermit was from Amiens in

the *chanson de geste* see N. L. Bard, "'C'est bien costume que soit pris chevaliers': A Consideration of Captivity in the Guillaume Cycle", in A. Berthelot and L. Zarker Morgan (eds), *Acts of the Seventeenth International Congress of the Société Rencesvals for the Study of Romance Epic*, Storrs, Connecticut, July 22–28, 2006 (2008), pp. 111–22.

¹³⁸ S. Throop traces the development of the concept and argues that it was widespread by the end of the twelfth century: 'Vengeance and the Crusades', *Crusades*, 5 (2006), pp. 21–38. See U. Schöning, 'Die Juden in der *Chanson d'Antioche*', *ZRP*, 102 (1986), pp. 40–52 for links between the vengeance theme and anti-Semitism. For the development of the theme, links to the Gospel of Nicodemus and diffusion see A. Micha, 'La légende de l'empereur malade et de la Vengeance du Sauveur dans les récits en prose française',

the northeast of France: while he receives little attention in other sources for the Crusade, he is a leading figure in Albert's account, and an obvious hero for a text originating in Picardy. And it provides an essential starting point for the narrative, paving the way for the defeat and ultimate redemption of the 'chétifs'.¹³⁹

The storyline thus set up is threaded right through the text. Laisses 19–34 dwell in detail on the defeat at Civetot, setting up the storyline for the *Chétifs*: this is referred to again in laisse 278. The entrusting of the sultan's son Brohadas to Corbaran in laisse 224 (puzzlingly repeated in laisse 274) and his subsequent death in battle in laisses 347–51 again lay the foundations for the *Chétifs*. Corbaran's mother Calabra and her prophecies are first alluded to in laisse 33; she appears again in 218 and her conversation with Corbaran is recorded at length in laisses 278–82.

The compiler also repeats particularly striking material, both to provide links through the text and because (we surmise) it played well with the audience. The appearance of the saints at the battle of Antioch attested in the *GF* and other sources is prefigured by their help at Nicaea, Dorylaeum and early in the siege of Antioch. The cowardice of Stephen of Blois at Antioch is prefigured by his cowardice at Nicaea, to which the text returns three times. Guy, the seneschal to the Byzantine emperor who appears abruptly in the middle of the *GF*, is introduced at the start of the poem when the Crusaders first reach Byzantium.¹⁴⁰

The subsequent development of the Cycle

The thirteenth century brought a trend towards the creation of epic cycles.¹⁴¹ Pre-existing texts were brought together into loosely linked structures mixing comic, heroic and tragic. Typically they were structured around a central protagonist who

Mélanges de littérature du Moyen Age au vingtième siècle offerts à Mlle Jeanne Lods (2 vols, Paris, 1978), pp. 433–46; J.-P. Bordier, 'Rome contre Jérusalem: la légende de la Vengeance Jhesuchrist', in D. Poirion (ed.), *Jérusalem, Rome, Constantinople: l'image et le mythe de la ville au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1986), pp. 93–124.

¹³⁹ See J. Flori, 'Des chroniques à l'épopée ... ou bien l'inverse?' *PM*, 20 (1994), pp. 36–43.

¹⁴⁰ For help from saints see laisse 358; referred to at Nicaea, laisses 53 and 210; Dorylaeum laisse 100; assisting Godfrey on arrival at Antioch laisse 124. For Stephen's cowardice at Antioch see laisses 233–4; prefigured heavy-handedly at Nicaea laisses 62–70. For Guy's lament for Bohemond see laisse 286; prepared for by the help Guy gives the Crusaders at Constantinople laisse 38. The intervention by saints is found in the *GF* and related texts: *GF*, p. 69; *RM*, p. 171. The saints – an alliance of George, Mercurius, Demetrius and Maurice – are all Byzantine warrior saints: see C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine art and tradition* (Aldershot, 2003). With the exception of Maurice they were in what Walter describes as the 'état-major' of warrior saints (pp. 41–3).

¹⁴¹ S. Sturm-Maddox and D. Maddox (eds), *Transtextualities: of cycles and cyclicity in Medieval French literature* (Binghamton, NY, 1996); B. Besamusca et al. (eds),

was provided with *enfances* and a family background, and whose descendants would carry on the tradition as further exploits were added.¹⁴² The *Guillaume*, for example, began with an account of the historical William of Gellone who lived in the late eighth and early ninth centuries: poems were added to this describing more episodes from his life and the exploits of his nephew Vivien and his father Garin de Monglane.¹⁴³

This is precisely the process we see in the creation of the Cycle. The legends around the ancestry and childhood of Godfrey were added at some point in the first half of the thirteenth century, marking an increasing focus on his metamorphosis from the compromise candidate for king to legendary hero. This may in turn have sparked the interest that led to the addition of further material taking the crusaders' exploits right through the twelfth century. 'Godfrey, himself emblematic of the crusade's popular and successful God-ordained mission, became so transcendent through his exploits that his glory eclipsed the historical reality that attended the mere mortal.'¹⁴⁴

When, where and why was the Cycle compiled?

We cannot be more precise about dating the central Crusade trilogy than the first half of the thirteenth century.¹⁴⁵ Nor can we be precise about the circumstances of its composition. We can, however, offer a few pointers that suggest a provenance in north-eastern France.

The extant version of the text is visibly and strongly linked with Picardy.¹⁴⁶ The majority of the nine manuscripts originate in north-eastern France and show

Cyclification: the development of narrative cycles in the chanson de geste and the Arthurian romances (Amsterdam, 1994).

¹⁴² M. Heintze, 'Les techniques de la formation de cycles dans les chansons de geste', in Besamusca (ed.), *Cyclification*, pp. 21–58, 53–5.

¹⁴³ See J. Frappier, *Les chansons de geste du cycle de Guillaume d'Orange* (3 vols, Paris, 1955–83); M. Tyssens, *La Geste de Guillaume d'Orange dans les manuscrits cycliques* (Paris, 1967).

¹⁴⁴ Mikel (ed.), *Les Enfances Godefroi* (Crusade Cycle III), p. 69. On the creation of the Cycle more generally see E. J. Mikel, 'Imagining history in the *Enfances Godefroi*', in D. P. and M. J. Schenck (eds), *Echoes of the epic: studies in honor of Gerard J. Brault* (Birmingham, AL, 1998), pp. 175–87; E. J. Mikel, 'The Latin visions of Calabre and Ida and the origins of the initial branches of the OFCC', *N*, 88 (2004), pp. 181–88.

¹⁴⁵ Ms A dates from 1250 at the latest; the Laon fragment is probably early thirteenth century. For detailed discussion of manuscripts see Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 43–80; Myers ['Essay on MSS'], in *La Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne and Elioxe*, ed. Emanuel J. Mikel; *Beatrix*, ed. Jan A. Nelson (Crusade Cycle I), pp. xiii–lxxxviii; Sumberg, *Chanson*, pp. 32–138.

¹⁴⁶ See A. Winkler, 'La terre sainte: prolongement épique de la France du Nord? L'espace picard, flamand et lorrain dans le cycle de la Croisade', in E. Poulain-Gautret et al

Picard features in the language; there is also a Picard prose version. Much of the supporting cast is Picard.¹⁴⁷ Graindor, according to three manuscripts, was from Douai.¹⁴⁸ The First Crusade is recast as a Picard enterprise. The theme of the vengeance of Christ with which the text starts is linked both to Flanders and to the preaching of the Fourth Crusade that was so significant there.¹⁴⁹ Peter the Hermit was a local figure.

The prologue is explicit about the exemplary function of the text as an encouragement to the audience to go on crusade. The First Crusade is depicted as a just war with the aims of liberating the Holy Sepulchre, avenging the suffering of Jesus, and reclaiming land which rightfully belongs to Christ from the infidels; the crusaders are participants in 'un nouvel âge héroïque ... qui renoue avec l'idée impériale'.¹⁵⁰ While it is hard to pin the *Antioche* to a specific event, the cycle is in the words of Cook 'an energetic, if unofficial, parallel Crusading propaganda, available in a form easily digested by a broad audience'.¹⁵¹

(eds), *Le Nord de la France entre épopée et chronique* (Arras, 2005), pp. 179–90.

¹⁴⁷ For further discussion see index of people.

¹⁴⁸ Manuscripts B and C; ms E calls him Hervix de Douai. Ms A has Grainsdor de Dijon.

¹⁴⁹ This theme was central to the preaching of the Crusade. It was evoked in a series of bulls by Innocent III. See for example the *excitatorium* given by Abbot Martin of Pairis for the Crusade and recorded by one of his monks, Gunther of Pairis; Abbot Martin explicitly evoked the First Crusade, echoing the account of Urban's speech given by Robert the Monk: see *The Capture of Constantinople: the Hystoria Constantinopolitana of Gunther of Pairis*, ed. and trans. A. J. Andrea (Philadelphia, 1997), chapters 2 and 3. The literary version of these themes dates back to the seventh century and takes a number of forms: a *chanson de geste* by the end of the twelfth century, a prose version, and from the fourteenth century onwards a stage version. The earliest extant poetic version is tentatively linked to Flanders at the end of the twelfth century: see *The Oldest Version of the Twelfth-Century Poem 'La Venjance Nostre Seigneur'*, ed. L. A. T. Gryting (Michigan, 1952). The best-known poetic version, that of Eustache Mercadé of 1415, appeared in Arras: see S. K. Wright, *The Vengeance of Our Lord: Medieval Dramatizations of the Destruction of Jerusalem* (Toronto, 1989).

¹⁵⁰ H. Kleber, 'Pèlerinage – vengeance – conquête. La conception de la première croisade dans le cycle de Graindor de Douai', *Au Carrefour des routes d'Europe: la chanson de geste. Xe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, Strasbourg 1985* (Aix-en-Provence 1987), pp. 757–75, at 767.

¹⁵¹ R. F. Cook, 'Crusade propaganda in the epic cycles of the crusade', in B. N. Sargent-Baur (ed.), *Journeys towards God: Pilgrimage and Crusade* (Kalamazoo, 1992), pp. 157–75, at 167. On the First and Third Crusades as catalysts for crusade epic see J. Richard, 'L'arrière-plan historique des deux cycles de la croisade', in K.-H. Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade*, pp. 6–16.

Summary

We cannot be precise about date, authorship and composition of either the *Antioche* or of the Cycle of which it forms part. However a tentative outline might suggest that the central Crusade trilogy was produced by a compiler or compilers, who may have been Graindor de Douai or may have been commissioned by him, in the early thirteenth century. This compiler, building on an earlier *chanson de geste* tradition, used a mixture of pre-existing texts, convention, imagination and repetition to produce the *Antioche* and the two texts that accompany it, the *Chétifs* and the *Jérusalem*. Together they formed a trilogy. At some point in the first half of the thirteenth century the Godfrey texts were pulled together by a further compiler, possibly Renaus, although not edited to fit the storyline: the compilation reflected a new emphasis on the house of Bouillon. The continuations were added in the second half of the century, although their preservation in only four manuscripts suggests that by this time interest in the Cycle was waning. The extant *Antioche* was written as part of the central trilogy, and this is reflected in its content, style and structure.

The manuscripts and the various versions of the *Antioche*

The *Antioche* survives in nine manuscripts, two fragments and a prose summary. While no two are identical, they fall broadly speaking into four distinct versions of the text spanning the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. There are two different classifications of the manuscripts of the *Antioche*: Duparc-Quioc’s and Nelson’s. We have followed Duparc-Quioc’s. The table below sets out the two classifications for ease of use.

Manuscript	Duparc-Quioc	Nelson
B.N.fr. 12558	A (base manuscript)	A
B. N. fr. 795	B	C
B. N. fr. 1621	C	D
B. N. fr. 786	D (also fragment H)	B (base manuscript)
Berne 320	E	F
Arséna1 3139	F	G
B. N. fr. 12569	G	E
B. Mus. Add. 36615	L	I
Turin LIII25	T	T

For ease of reference we follow Duparc-Quioc's classification and terminology, although we incline to see the different versions as existing concurrently rather than following a smooth chronological progression.¹⁵² This in itself shows both that the text continued to be read and copied, and that it attracted sufficient interest to be repeatedly revised.

What she describes as the 'version ancienne' is preserved in manuscripts A, B and C. These contain the *Enfants Cygnes* in both the *Elioxe* and the *Béatrice* versions, the *Chevalier au Cygne*, the *Enfances Godefroi* and the *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem*; C and others contain the *Retour de Cornumarant*. The three also contain the 'douze couplets'. The Metz fragment also belongs to this version. The 'version intermédiaire', preserved in D (and the fragment H) contains all of these but with additional episodes, some of which subsequently appear in the 'version plus récente'. The 'version mixte' is preserved only in E. It is what its soubriquet implies, closest, however, to D. The 'version plus récente' of manuscripts F, G, L and T contains all the above plus the *Chrétienté Corbaran* and in some versions the *Prise d'Acre*, L taking the story all the way to Saladin: by this time fantasy has completely outstripped reality: in the *Prise d'Acre* for example Godfrey marries Corbaran's sister Matroine.

The following description of the manuscripts is summarised from Duparc-Quioc and from Myers' studies of the Cycle manuscripts.

Version ancienne:

Manuscript A, B.N. fr. 12558 (ms A in Nelson): mid-thirteenth century, probably produced in Picardy or Luxembourg. Well produced with some miniatures. Contains six branches: a unique version of the *Enfants Cygnes* (the *Elioxe* version), *Chevalier au Cygne*, *Enfances Godefroi*, and the *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem* trilogy. Duparc-Quioc uses this as the basis of her edition, arguing that it contains the oldest and therefore more authentic version.¹⁵³

Manuscript B, B.N. fr.795 (ms C in Nelson): Picard. Some miniatures but lower standard of execution than ms. A. Contains the *Béatrix* version of the *Enfants Cygnes*, the *Chevalier au Cygne*, the *Fin d'Elias*, the *Enfances Godefroi*, the *Retour de Cornumarant* and the *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem*.

Manuscript C, B. N. fr.1621 (ms D in Nelson): small carefully written manuscript in Artesian dialect, no miniatures: recorded as belonging to Claude Fauchet. Contains the same as B with the omission of the *Fin d'Elias*; followed by *Histoire de Charlemagne*.

Me: a recently discovered fragment in the municipal archives at Metz of 74 lines corresponding to vv.7764–847 of Duparc-Quioc's edition but ten lines

¹⁵² Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 43–80.

¹⁵³ Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 80–83.

shorter. The editor dates it to the mid-thirteenth century with a Picard provenance. It is related to, but not the same as, mss B and C.¹⁵⁴

Version intermédiaire:

Manuscript D, B. N. fr. 786 (ms B in Nelson). Second half of the thirteenth century; large number of miniatures. Contains the same texts as B.

Manuscript H: a fragment discovered in the municipal library at Laon by Robert Bossuat; corresponds to vv.6588-636 of manuscript D.¹⁵⁵

Version mixte:

Manuscript E, Berne 320 (ms F in Nelson): mid-thirteenth century, ornamented letters but no miniatures. Contains fragments of the *Fin d'Elias* and *Chevalier au Cygne*, the *Enfances Godefroi* and the *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem* trilogy. Its version of the *Antioche* contains additional material such as Bohemond fighting off a lion at the citadel of Antioch.

Version plus récente:

Manuscript F, Arsenal 3139 (ms G in Nelson): a high quality manuscript with 18 large miniatures; in Picard/Walloon dialect; dated 1268 on the last leaf. From the library of the Prince de Soubise. Contains a mixed *Elixe/Béatrice* version of the *Enfants Cygnes*, the *Chevalier au Cygne*, the *Fin d'Elias*, the *Enfances Godefroi*, the *Retour de Cornumarant*, the *Antioche-Chétifs-Jérusalem* trilogy and the *Chrétienté Corbaran*: announces though does not contain the *Prise d'Acre*.

Manuscript G, B. N. fr. 12569 (ms E in Nelson): late thirteenth- or early fourteenth century; two pages of miniatures; Duparc-Quioc conjectures an origin in Arras. Contains the *Béatrice* version of the *Enfants Cygnes* and all texts including the *Prise d'Acre*, the *Mort Godefroi* and the *Chanson des Rois Baudouin*.

Manuscript L, British Museum add. 36615 (ms I in Nelson): an extensive compilation of material from the fourteenth century in two hands. The first part is dated by Duparc-Quioc to 1300–50 and contains the mixed *Elixe/Béatrix* version of the *Enfants Cygnes* plus all the branches as far as the start of the *Prise d'Acre*. The second and third parts, dated between 1350–1400 by Duparc-Quioc, take the story from Godfrey's death to Saladin.

Manuscript T, Turin LIH25 (ms T in Nelson): probably to be dated 1300–1325. However, it was badly burnt in a fire in 1904; Duparc-Quioc included such material as she could decipher in her edition. It contains the same texts as B.

¹⁵⁴ J.-C. Herbin, 'Un fragment inédit de la Chanson d'Antioche', *R*, 127 (2009), pp. 225–30.

¹⁵⁵ R. Bossuat, 'Un fragment de la *Chanson d'Antioche*', *NM*, 23 (1931), pp. 110–18.

Three other manuscripts of the Cycle – Berne 627, Bodleian Douce 381 and British Museum King's Library 1525 E VI do not contain the *Antioche* although the latter two contain the *Jérusalem*.¹⁵⁶ Interestingly the *Chétifs* is found in Bodleian Hattou 77 alongside an alexandrine poem describing the Crusade, of which more below.

Summary

We can draw a number of conclusions from this rather complex picture. The first is that the Cycle remained popular throughout the thirteenth century and well into the fourteenth, evidenced both by the dating of manuscripts and the amount of reworking it underwent. Judging by the spread of manuscripts it was particularly popular in north-eastern France, reflected in the central role of Godfrey.

The second is that the Cycle was in a state of constant evolution, testimony in itself to its popularity. The selection of texts and the versions of those texts are different in every manuscript. There was no clear chronological evolution: a number of versions were in circulation simultaneously, and dating of manuscript is no guide to dating of text.¹⁵⁷ Thus the apparently oldest version preserved in the Turin manuscript seems to have been composed at the same time as the most recent version preserved in the first part of ms L. The boundaries of the Cycle itself were fluid: the *Chétifs* is copied alongside a verse account of the Crusade that is completely separate from the Cycle. Within this process the individual texts of the Cycle kept their identity, although the extent to which this is marked out in the manuscripts varies.

The third conclusion is that the *Antioche–Chétifs–Jérusalem* trilogy is found at the heart of nearly all versions, suggesting its enduring popularity.

What happened next: the influence of the poetic history of the Crusade

As the events of the Crusade became more remote, their depiction became increasingly fantastic and romantic. Legends began to grow even in the lifetime of the Crusaders: Orderic Vitalis tells a lengthy story about the captivity of Bohemond and his rescue by a Saracen princess, and several texts describe Godfrey's 'coup épique' cutting a Saracen in half 'quasi tenerem porrum' according to Orderic

¹⁵⁶ Berne 627 is dated from the mid thirteenth-century by Myers, 'Essay on MSS', in *Crusade Cycle I*, p. liv. The British Museum manuscript is the Talbot manuscript of 1445 prepared for Margaret of Anjou (*Ibid.*, p. xlviii).

¹⁵⁷ Mickel and Nelson, *Naissance* (*Crusade Cycle I*), p. xv: 'every extant manuscript provides a different version of the cycle'.

Vitalis.¹⁵⁸ Certainly by the end of the twelfth century the participants of the First Crusade would barely have recognised themselves in a world of three-headed dragons and Corbaran as potential Christian convert.

The poetic version of the Crusade, to judge by the number and dating of manuscripts, remained popular – if not a bestseller – throughout the thirteenth century and into the fourteenth. The *Tractatus de Diversis Materiis Predicabilibus* by the Dominican Stephen of Bourbon tells a number of stories from the First Crusade *chanson de geste* tradition including Golfier de Las Tours and his lion, and the story of Rainalt Porcet.¹⁵⁹

Versions of the Cycle continued to be produced into the fifteenth century. There is a prose version, B. N. fr.781, a set of summaries in Picard dialect, probably nearest to manuscript C and dating from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.¹⁶⁰ The taking of the Cross is set at Bouillon, reflecting the continuing emphasis on Godfrey.¹⁶¹ The text known as the *Geste de Chevalier au Cygne* preserved in one manuscript at Copenhagen preserves a version of the Godfrey texts as far as the beginning of the *Enfances Godefroi*. It dates from 1465–73 and was produced at the request of Marie de Clèves, widow of Charles d'Orléans, reflecting the belief of her family that they were descended from Hélias.¹⁶²

A different Old French alexandrine version also appeared. Two manuscripts, Hatton 77 in Oxford and British Museum Add. 34114 from Spalding, preserve a work of some 16,000 lines that appears to be based on the work of Baudri of Bourgueil and to bear little relationship to the Cycle: however, the text has hardly been studied and would repay closer attention.¹⁶³ Meyer dated the Hatton manuscript to the second half of the thirteenth century and the Spalding manuscript

¹⁵⁸ OV, pp. 356–79 for the romance of Bohemond's captivity and release by a Saracen princess; see F. M. Warren, 'The enamoured Moslem princess in Orderic Vitalis and the French epic', *PMLA*, 29 (1914), pp. 341–58; OV, p. 84 for epic blow.

¹⁵⁹ *Stephani de Borbone: Tractatus de Diversis Materiis Predicabilibus*, ed. J. Berlioz and J.-L. Eichenlaub (3 vols, Turnhout, 2002–2006): vol. 3, p. 556, example 1304 for Golfier; vol. 3, pp. 503–4, example 1138 for Rainalt Porcet.

¹⁶⁰ *Godefroi de Buillon*, ed. J. B. Roberts (Crusade Cycle X, 1996), p. xxiv.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. xxxi.

¹⁶² *La Geste du Chevalier au Cygne*, ed. E. A. Emplaincourt (Crusade Cycle IX, 1989).

¹⁶³ Extracts were published by Paul Meyer: 'Un récit en vers de la première croisade fondé sur Baudri de Bourgueil', *R*, 5 (1876), pp. 1–63; *R*, 6 (1877), pp. 489–94; the text has not been published in full. See also Duparc-Quioç, *Etude*, pp. 103–5; K.-H. Bender, 'De Godefroy à Saladin. Le premier cycle de la croisade: entre la chronique et le conte de fées (1100–1300)', in K.-H. Bender and H. Kleber (eds), *Les épopées romanes*, GRLMA III.1.2 fasc.5 (1986): pp. 33–83 (for the central trilogy 33–56, for the text based on Baudri, 81–3); A. Petit, 'Le camp chrétien devant Antioche', *R*, 108 (1987), pp. 503–19; *Canso*, pp. 71–6. The Spalding manuscript contains a 4000-verse continuation.

to a century later.¹⁶⁴ Hatton 77, as noted above, also contains a version of the *Chétifs*.

The *Antioche* also made its way to Occitania, where elements of it appear much changed in the fragmentary *Canso d'Antiocha*. The content of the *Canso* closely reflects the content and structure of the *Antioche*. For example, both set the battle on a Friday in a clear if unhistorical link to the vengeance theme; they share a description over several *laisses* of Corbaran being advised about the forces as they march out and his last-minute loss of nerve; and there are common episodes like the game of chess before battle and the proposed combat of champions.¹⁶⁵ Analysis of the language and rhymes of the text suggest that at least some of it was translated from Old French.¹⁶⁶

However the *Canso* also differs from the *Antioche* in several respects. It has, for example, seven rather than twelve columns, with the fanciful additions of the clergy and women and the column of the St-Pols missing. It also contains material that does not come from the *Antioche*, notably concerning the Limousin hero Golfier of Las Tours: some of this can be corroborated from elsewhere, some is unique.¹⁶⁷ We know from the evidence of the mid-thirteenth century Spanish compilation the *Gran Conquista de Ultramar* that the Occitan text continued to have a separate identity alongside the Old French text: it preserves sections of the *Canso* alongside sections of the *Antioche*, sometimes narrating the same material twice over once from each text; it also preserves material that shows a strong Occitan influence and may have come from lost sections of the text.¹⁶⁸

We explained above that poems about the First Crusade in Occitania are attested from the early twelfth century. We also know from Tudela's reference that by 1212–13 this tradition had taken the form of a *chanson de geste* in alexandrines with *vers orphelin* like the extant *Canso*. However, the *Canso* shows strong resemblances to the *Antioche* in its subject matter as argued above: for example, both set the battle on a Friday, both have a detailed description of a tent and both

¹⁶⁴ Meyer, 'Un récit', pp. 2–3.

¹⁶⁵ *Canso* v. 1 and *Antioche* vv. 7522, 7530, 7660 for battle on a Friday; *Canso* vv. 50–2 and *Antioche* laisse 299 for chess; *Canso* vv. 210–49 and *Antioche* laisses 294–7 for combat by champions.

¹⁶⁶ *Canso*, pp. 187–9; L. Paterson, 'Y-a-t'il une identité occitane au moyen âge?', in J.-C. Bouvier and J.-N. Pelen, *Récits d'Occitanie* (Aix-en-Provence, 2005), pp. 17–28.

¹⁶⁷ This material is marked by the presence of the Limousin Crusade hero Golfier de las Tours. For discussion of his role in the First Crusade and the Occitan tradition see *Canso*, pp. 7–17.

¹⁶⁸ *La Gran Conquista de Ultramar*, ed. L. Cooper (4 vols, Bogota, 1979). On the relationships between the *Antioche*, the *Canso* and the *Gran Conquista* see G. Paris, 'La Chanson d'Antioche provençale et la Gran Conquista de Ultramar', *R*, 17 (1888), pp. 513–41; *R*, 19 (1890), pp. 562–91; *R*, 22 (1893), pp. 345–63; G. T. Northup, 'La Gran Conquista de Ultramar and its problems', *HR*, 2 (1934), pp. 287–302; Duparc-Quioc, *Etude*, pp. 188–203; *Canso*, pp. 28–45.

have a set of *laisses similaires* describing the forces marching out of Antioch. This suggests that by the middle of the thirteenth century at the latest some version of the *Antioche* had made its way to Occitania and fused with the existing Occitan epic tradition. However, the *Gran Conquista* shows that the Occitan and French texts were still seen as sufficiently different to continue to exist side by side. This suggests that the Occitan *chanson de geste* was sufficiently deep-rooted not to be displaced by and indeed to survive alongside the French one; it is likely that Bechada's work at the start of the twelfth century still cast a long shadow.¹⁶⁹

Iconography also suggests that the story of events at Antioch remained popular. In 1251 Henry III had the story of Antioch and duel of King Richard painted in the Antioch chamber at Clarendon Palace, and commissioned similar paintings in the Tower of London; another room at Clarendon had paintings of Alexander, showing the perceived equivalent status of the two cycles.¹⁷⁰

During the fourteenth century, a new form of the Cycle also developed: the Second Crusade Cycle.¹⁷¹ It was an influential text, put into Flemish, and adopted by Philippe le Bon as an example for his own crusading aspirations.¹⁷² The long verse text (35,180 lines) known variously as the *Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroi de Bouillon* (henceforth *CCGFB*) and the *Godefroid* appeared in 1356: it survives in two manuscripts at Brussels and Lyon. A set of later texts were in turn based on it: *Baudouin de Sebourg*, the *Bâtard de Bouillon* and the now lost *Saladin*.¹⁷³ Cook argues for a gradual growth in the Cycle with different versions of the same texts: 'étant donné l'intérêt commercial indéniable de la légende de la première Croisade ... il n'est pas interdit d'imaginer un certain nombre de rédactions du Cycle.'¹⁷⁴ He argues that mss. L and T represent a transition from the First to the Second Cycle

¹⁶⁹ For further analysis of how the Occitan text might reflect a previous Occitan epic tradition see R. Lafont, 'Épopée d'oïl et épopée d'oc: la place de la cançon d'Antiocha', in D. Billy and A. Buckley (eds), *Études de langue et de littérature offerts à Peter T. Ricketts* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 37–46.

¹⁷⁰ J. Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (London, 1993), p. 107; T. B. James, *The Palaces of Medieval England* (London, 1990), p. 82. Room 40 of the British Museum houses two tiles from Chertsey Abbey showing the combat of Richard and Saladin.

¹⁷¹ See Duparc-Quioç, *Cycle*; R. F. Cook and L. J. Crist, *Le deuxième cycle de la croisade* (Geneva, 1972); E. Roy, 'Les poèmes relatifs à la première croisade: le poème de 1356 et ses sources', *R*, 55 (1929), pp. 411–68.

¹⁷² Olivier de la Marche describes a banquet held by Philippe le Bon in Lille in 1453 where the Chevalier au Cygne put in an appearance to encourage the guests to attend a tournament: *Mémoires*, ed. H. Beaune and J. d'Arbaumont (4 vols, Paris, 1884–88), vol. 2, pp. 340–45.

¹⁷³ *Le Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon*, ed. F. de Reiffenberg and A. Borgnet (3 vols, Brussels, 1846–59); *Baudouin de Sebourg*, ed. L. S. Crist (2 vols, Paris, 2002); *Le Bâtard de Bouillon*, ed. R. F. Cook (Geneva, 1972).

¹⁷⁴ Cook and Crist, p. 40.

and that the two are related: the Second Cycle is ‘essentiellement une version profondément remaniée du premier Cycle de la Croisade.’¹⁷⁵

CCGFB is based on the more recent version of the Cycle although it is not clear exactly what variant. The material is heavily compressed: for example, the siege of Antioch is squeezed into some 700 lines compared to nearly 3500 in the *Antioche*. Historical detail is added from the *Eracles*. The text is full of fantasy and romance: Corbaran’s sister Florie is sent to Damascus and in turn rescued by Dodequin, married off to Godfrey and then to Tancred once he has had Godfrey poisoned; Baldwin meanwhile marries the Sultan’s daughter Margalie.¹⁷⁶

Baudouin de Sebourg, running to some 26,000 lines, probably dates from around 1360 to 1370; it is heavily based on existing *chansons de geste*.¹⁷⁷ The *Batard de Bouillon* survives in what is probably a fragment of around 6,500 lines. *Saladin* starts with the death of Tancred and takes events through the reign of Baldwin IV via Saladin’s love affair with the wife of Philip Augustus to the fall of Acre in 1291. It survives in four versions.¹⁷⁸ The exact order of composition and history of the texts are unclear.¹⁷⁹

By this stage the poetic version of the Crusade had moved away from any discernible relationship with the actual events of 1095 to 1099 and had become one of the great poetic cycles alongside those of Charlemagne and Arthur. An index of its influence was the promotion of Godfrey to the ranks of the Nine Worthies in the early fourteenth century. These comprised three figures from antiquity (Hector, Alexander and Julius Caesar); three from the Old Testament (David, Judas Maccabeus and Joshua); and three from post-Antiquity (Charlemagne, Arthur and Godfrey). Godfrey was the only figure from the post-Carolingian era to be so distinguished.¹⁸⁰ Already in 1285 ms. B. N. fr. 786 put the OFCC alongside the *Roman d’Alexandre*.¹⁸¹ Godfrey’s fame was reflected in the fifteen tapestries recounting the history of Godfrey of Bouillon we know to have existed at the

¹⁷⁵ Cook and Crist, p. 9.

¹⁷⁶ Roy’s view is trenchant and possibly closer to that of a modern audience: ‘elle ressemble à l’épée de Corbaran, longue, plate, mortelle’, p. 431.

¹⁷⁷ Crist (ed.), pp. xlv–vi.

¹⁷⁸ It forms part of the fifteenth-century prose work *Jean d’Avesnes* in two manuscripts alongside an adaptation of the *Dit du Prunier* and a prose version of the *Fille du Comte de Ponthieu*. It also survives in Jehan la Gogue’s version of 1490; as part of annals of Cambrai at the start of the sixteenth century; and in a version analysed by Léon Gautier: Cook and Crist, p. 61.

¹⁷⁹ E. Labande, *Etude sur Baudouin de Sebourg* (Paris, 1940); Duparc-Quioc, *Cycle*, pp. 118–43; Cook and Crist, pp. 9–51.

¹⁸⁰ M. Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984), pp. 121–4.

¹⁸¹ K. Busby, ‘Mythe et histoire dans le manuscrit Paris, BNF, fr. 786: la conjointure du Cycle de la Croisade et du *Roman d’Alexandre*’, in A. Labbé, D. Lacroix and D. Quérueu (eds), *Guerres, voyages et quêtes au Moyen Age: Mélanges offerts à Jean-Claude Faucon* (Paris, 2000), pp. 73–81.

country residence of Thomas of Woodstock, Earl of Gloucester in the fourteenth century.¹⁸² The cycle and Godfrey's heroism had a strong influence on Philippe de Mézières, tutor to Charles VI of France, and Godfrey is referred to by Guillaume de Machaut and Eustache Deschamps.¹⁸³ The historical count of Bouillon was long forgotten: it was his poetic namesake immortalised through the OFCC who was to be set in the ultimate medieval pantheon.

Interest in the poetic depiction of the Crusade continued into the fifteenth century. There was a final high-flown poetic flowering in the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Torquato Tasso.¹⁸⁴

By the time the *Antioche* reappeared in the nineteenth century it had taken on a very different guise: a monument to French national pride. In the early 1840s King Louis-Philippe commissioned some 50 artists to paint the Salles des Croisades at Versailles.¹⁸⁵ This provoked a rush to prove noble ancestry, with the enterprising Eugène-Henri Courtois and his associates supplying fake charters on demand.¹⁸⁶ The 1848 edition by Paulin Paris should be seen against this backdrop.

The fascination with Antioch

What is intriguing in this complex history is the focus on Antioch rather than Jerusalem. Where we have references to a poetic text, they consistently refer to Antioch. Ambroise refers to an 'estorie' about Antioch.¹⁸⁷ The Occitan *Canso de la Crozada* explicitly modelled itself on a 'canso d'Antiocha'.¹⁸⁸ In his poem on the fall of Acre, the early thirteenth-century patriarch of Jerusalem Aymar described how three hundred thousand Turks fled from the Franks 'sicut Gesta referunt Antiochenorum'.¹⁸⁹ We also know that in the mid-thirteenth century Glastonbury Abbey possessed a 'liber de capcione civitatis Antiochenae'.¹⁹⁰ These references

¹⁸² E. Siberry, *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Aldershot, 2000), p. 56.

¹⁸³ See J. B. Williamson, 'Philippe de Mézières et l'influence du cycle de la croisade au 14e siècle', in Bender (ed.), *Les épopées*, pp. 163–9, at 163 for Machaut and Deschamps; at 167 for a book in the library of Charles VI about the Crusade from the count of St-Pol.

¹⁸⁴ *Torquato Tasso: Gerusalemme Liberata*, ed. Lanfranco Caretti (Milan: Mondadori, 1979). Siberry, *New Crusaders*, pp. 35–7; E. Siberry, 'Tasso and the Crusades: history of a legacy', *JMH*, 19 (1993), pp. 163–9.

¹⁸⁵ Siberry, *New Crusaders*, pp. 169–71 and appendix C.

¹⁸⁶ Siberry, *New Crusaders*, pp. 51–2; C. Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, 1998), p. 118.

¹⁸⁷ Ambroise, vv. 8497–9.

¹⁸⁸ See above for discussion.

¹⁸⁹ *Haymaro monacho, De expugnatione Accone*, ed. P. Riant (Paris, 1865), p. 34.

¹⁹⁰ M. Blaess, 'Les manuscrits français dans les monastères anglais au Moyen-Age', *R*, 94 (1973), pp. 321–58, at 324 and 328.

are found even at a time when the compilation of the OFCC had set the story of events at Antioch in the wider crusading context. This suggests that a text or texts about Antioch had a strong identity.

However the contemporary Latin sources, without exception, all take the story of the crusade as far as Jerusalem; FC and AA go beyond. The titles of the works – Guibert’s *Dei Gesta per Francos* or Albert’s *Historia Ierosolimitana* – do not refer to Antioch. There was no doubt about the goal of the crusade and about the spiritual and earthly significance of Jerusalem: as Robert the Monk put it, ‘post creationem mundi quid mirabilius factum est praeter salutiferae crucis mysterium, quam quod modernis temporibus actum est in hoc itinere nostrorum Iherosolimitanorum?’¹⁹¹ Indeed by the start of the thirteenth century the compiler of the Cycle was clear that the *Antioche* needed to be set in the wider context of the Crusade.

So why the poetic focus on Antioch? One possible explanation is Bohemond’s territorial ambitions. His crusade stopped at Antioch, where a spiritual expedition turned into a traditional Norman land grab.¹⁹² The unease this created is reflected in the *GF*, which switches to Raymond of St-Gilles’ point of view after the battle of Antioch.¹⁹³ We know from Orderic Vitalis that Bohemond spent time and energy giving his point of view when he came to France in 1105–1106 to marry the daughter of the king of France and recruit a force to lead against Constantinople.¹⁹⁴ So it would be tempting to see the creation of an ur-*Antioche* in the same light: a kind of ‘geste du duc Bohémond’ portraying Antioch as the centrepiece of the crusade and justifying Bohemond’s possession. The trouble is that we have no evidence to back this up. The extant *Antioche* gives little emphasis to Bohemond’s role: while he features frequently, he is outshone in heroic feats by Godfrey and the St-Pols. And it is virtually alone in not vilifying Taticius, the double-dealing anti-hero of the *GF*.¹⁹⁵ So if any kind of pro-Bohemond text does lurk beneath

¹⁹¹ ‘what more miraculous undertaking has there been (other than the mystery of the redeeming Cross) than what was achieved in our own time by this journey of our own people to Jerusalem?’: *RM*, Prologue (trans. Sweetenham).

¹⁹² H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham (Oxford, 1972), pp. 45–6. On the fraught relationship with Byzantium that followed see R. J. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States 1096–1204*, trans. J. C. Morris and J. E. Ridings (Oxford, 1993), pp. 72–5.

¹⁹³ The Bohemond thesis was originally outlined by A. C. Krey, ‘A neglected passage in the *Gesta* and its bearing on the literature of the First Crusade’, in L. J. Paetow (ed.), *The Crusades and other historical essays presented by Dana C. Munro* (New York, 1928), pp. 57–78. See also C. Witzel, ‘Le problème de l’auteur des *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*’, *MAGE*, 61 (1955), pp. 319–28; K. B. Wolf, ‘Crusade and narrative: Bohemond and the *Gesta Francorum*’, *JMH*, 17 (1991), pp. 207–16.

¹⁹⁴ *OV*, pp. 68–71.

¹⁹⁵ *RM*, for example, devotes a chapter to his treachery (pp. 128–9). Compare *Antioche*, which shows him defending the interests of the Crusaders stoutly (vv. 859–1124).

the surface of the *Antioche*, it is well hidden.¹⁹⁶ The most we can say is that Bohemond's influence cast a long shadow over subsequent perceptions.

Another possible explanation is the strategic importance of Antioch, something reflected in many of the sources for the Crusade. It was crucial to the capture of Jerusalem. Tactically, the battle of Antioch was the last point at which enough Turks could have been concentrated to try and stop the Crusade.¹⁹⁷ The crusaders preparing for battle in Antioch were in a state of starvation, determination and exaltation, aware that battle against all the odds was the only option left: it is no coincidence that this is the only part of the Crusade where virtually all the sources describe miraculous divine help.¹⁹⁸ So Antioch was crucial not only militarily, but also in justifying the cause of the Crusade: God's support was reflected in practical help. All this may be true, but it is hard to see it having the same weight as the immense theological and spiritual capital represented by Jerusalem.

More speculatively, we might argue that the experience at Antioch left a deep emotional scar in the collective consciousness; that the squabbles and sieges of the route to Jerusalem were something of an anti-climax; and that perhaps the actual capture of the Holy City and the appalling bloodshed that marked the release of three years' anticipation and tension were a reality simply too painful to contemplate compared to the spiritual significance.¹⁹⁹

Ultimately we have no compelling evidence to explain why the vernacular poetic tradition emphasised Antioch and not Jerusalem. But it is clear that Antioch left a deep memory long after the Crusade had finished. We have argued a strong probability that the legends generated at Antioch were recorded in epic form early in the twelfth century. From that point on the focus on Antioch not only reflected the legend but contributed to its growth.

¹⁹⁶ For a recent refutation see E. Albu, *The Normans in their Histories: Propaganda, Myth and Subversion* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 177–9.

¹⁹⁷ Asbridge, pp. 153–7; R. C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare 1097–1193* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 172: '[the Christians] staked everything on a sortie and battle'; see also J. France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge, 1994).

¹⁹⁸ Asbridge, p. 221: 'all the eyewitness sources indicate that total defeat seemed both inevitable and imminent'. RA, pp. 60, 63; *GF*, p. 69; PT, p. 88; BB, p. 77; GN, p. 110; RM, p. 171 all recount help from celestial white forces led by various warrior saints. We do not know what the Crusaders really saw and how far extreme hunger and stress may have led to some form of collective hallucination: similar uncertainties and legends surround the so-called angels of Mons (on which see D. Clarke, *The Angels of Mons: Phantom Soldiers and Ghostly Guardians* (Chichester, 2005)). More important is the symbolic aspect, with the white forces representing God's approval of the enterprise: see B. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind* (Aldershot, 1982), pp. 201–3.

¹⁹⁹ 'The wholesale killing of prisoners and civilians often followed what was seen as the senseless, unheroic deaths of comrades': J. Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-face Killing in Twentieth-century Warfare* (London, 1999), p. 204.

Conclusion: the biography of the *Antioche*

Pulling together all these threads, we suggest the following biography for the *Antioche*: It seems beyond doubt that there was early *chanson de geste* style material at or very shortly after the time of the crusade, reflected both across contemporary Latin chronicles and in the *Antioche* itself. We know also that there were contemporary vernacular poems drawing on lived experience – notably the Occitan poem of Gregory Bechada – but there is no evidence of their form or content. So this ‘ur-*Antioche*’ could have been a vernacular poem, but there is no evidence it was a *chanson de geste*. Nor do we have any evidence to link this material with the shadowy Richard le Pèlerin. The most we can say is that by 1110 there was an early form of some of the material which later appeared in the *Antioche*, and that poems about the crusade existed in Occitania during the first third of the twelfth century.

The *Antioche* then disappears from view until the last quarter of the twelfth century. Cabrera’s reference and the use of a ‘canso d’Antioica’ as model for the *Canso de la Crozada* suggest that there was by then a recognised version that is likely to have been a *chanson de geste*, although we do not know whether this was French or Occitan. Some of the material that was later to appear in the OFCC was already in existence too. William of Tyre’s reference to the legend of the Swan Knight shows that other material later to surface in the Cycle already existed.

At some point early in the thirteenth century, this epic material took on a new form. It was recast and developed into a trilogy by a compiler, ‘Graindor’: the evidence is not clear whether he was writer or commissioner. The compiler took as his basis a number of pre-existing sources: material on the vengeance of Christ (‘le vrai commencement’); a source we postulate as having been written for the St-Pol family around the turn of the century combining material from Albert of Aachen and Robert the Monk with family tradition, which formed the backbone of the *Antioche*; a combination of legendary material and a Byzantine story in the *Chétifs*; and largely the *Antioche* itself as source for the *Jérusalem*. The emphasis on exploits by north-eastern French knights, the closeness to Albert of Aachen and the central role of Peter the Hermit all point to a north-eastern French origin.

Other texts were added to this central trilogy during the first half of the thirteenth century, transforming it into a full epic cycle and linking it to the complex of legends around Godfrey and the Swan Knight. From here on the *Antioche* and the Cycle are inextricably linked, although the *Antioche* shows little if any influence from the texts subsequently added to the central trilogy. The cycle was in a state of constant evolution during the century, existing in four separate and concurrent manuscript traditions. The provenance of extant manuscripts points strongly to north-eastern France as the place of origin.

Manuscript evidence and allusions in other texts suggest that the Cycle remained modestly popular during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It made its way in some form to Occitania, where it fused with the existing Occitan epic tradition: a fragment of this is preserved as the *Canso d’Antioica*. During

the fourteenth century the Cycle underwent a major *remaniement* in the form of the Second Crusade Cycle, which existed alongside the First Cycle. The raising of Godfrey of Bouillon to the ranks of the Nine Worthies is a clear index of just how successful the Cycle became. The *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Torquato Tasso marked a final flowering of Crusade legends. By this stage the events and personalities of the Crusade were almost entirely lost in legend and fantasy. The poetic version would not re-emerge until 1848, when it appeared under the guise of a new kind of romanticisation: the glorification of the Middle Ages as part of the glorification of France.

What is striking is that the *Antioche* maintained a separate identity until well into the thirteenth century. For whatever reason, Antioch continued to exercise a strong hold on the imagination. We do not know what was said and sung during the long evenings round the campfire at Antioch. But ultimately it was to generate an epic cycle on a par with the cycles of Charlemagne and Arthur, conferring semi-legendary immortality on the heroes of 1099.

Chapter 2

The *Chanson d'Antioche* as a Historical Source

In this chapter we examine the extent to which the *Chanson d'Antioche* can be regarded as an independent historical source for the First Crusade. Its attribution to the supposed eye-witness Richard le Pèlerin and the startling realism of some passages have led to its being given the status of a first-hand *témoignage*.

We disagree. As should be clear by now, the *Chanson d'Antioche* is at best of limited historical value as evidence for any aspect of the First Crusade. Although it almost certainly incorporates independent and early material that had been transmitted orally, the successive refashionings a century and more after the events described do not allow these original elements to be identified with certainty, let alone corroborated. At most, some parts may preserve traditions from the time of the Crusade that could be used with extreme caution as evidence.

The *Chanson d'Antioche* does, however, have historical validity of a different kind. Taken on its own terms as a thirteenth-century *chanson de geste*, it gives a vivid insight into the realities of warfare and contemporary mentalities. This makes it a source of considerable value for the early thirteenth century, if not for the events of 1095 to 1099.

The myth of the *Antioche* as a first-hand source

The first modern editor of the *Antioche*, Paulin Paris, was anxious to demonstrate its primacy as a source over contemporary Latin narratives. The long title of his work, *La Chanson d'Antioche, composée au commencement du XII^e siècle par le Pèlerin Richard, renouvelée sous la règne de Philippe Auguste par Graindor de Douay, publiée pour la première fois* (1848), demonstrates this. However, Henri Pigeonneau (1877) detected a strong resemblance between the *Chanson d'Antioche* and Albert of Aachen's *Historia*, which he claimed was the result of Graindor drawing on the *Historia* and reconciling Albert's narrative with that of the *Gesta Francorum*.¹ This thesis was rejected by Paris in the following year on the grounds that Albert's narrative was much richer in romantic episodes and

¹ H. Pigeonneau, *Le cycle de la croisade et la famille de Bouillon* (Paris, 1877), p. 37: 'La *Chanson d'Antioche* n'est qu'un remaniement, et souvent une traduction de la chronique d'Albert d'Aix et de celle de Tudebode, fondues avec une certaine habileté et combinées avec les traditions locales dont la trouvère s'est fait l'écho.'

these would have been irresistible to the poet if he had the *Historia* before his eyes.² These two positions remain the essence of the debate to this day, and the successors of Paris and Pigeonneau have scarcely shifted their ground, nor have they found new ammunition, although they use the old – the texts – with more sophistication.

It was not until 1932 that the question of the *Antioche*'s status as a source was revisited, by Anouar Hatem in a lengthy discussion of the whole crusade 'cycle' (though, as he pointed out, none of the manuscript compilations he studied manifested any homogeneity).³ He was severe about Paris's edition of the *Chanson d'Antioche*, which he considered a 'modèle d'arbitraire et d'incohérence'.⁴ Hatem was the first critic to attempt to distinguish the work of Graindor from the original *chanson* by Richard. He suggested, for example, that the first part was Graindor's, but the rest was an original eye-witness account owing nothing at all to Albert or to any other of the Latin narratives. He cited as evidence the favourable treatment of Taticius – 'Estatins' – in the poem, which is at odds with his presentation by all the Latin writers.⁵ In Hatem's opinion Richard the Pilgrim was not only an eye-witness, but he could be located with Robert of Flanders' army. Richard wrote before 1101, Hatem believed, otherwise he would not have been so harsh in his condemnation of Stephen of Blois, who redeemed his reputation by a martyr's death. By inference, any resemblances with the Latin sources had to be the result of their drawing on Richard the Pilgrim's *chanson*. Hatem's examination of the *Chétifs* and *Jérusalem* concluded that both were written in the East and much later; Robert Goossens postulated a Syrian origin for the *Chétifs* (and dated it to the 1140s). He suggested, almost in passing, Byzantine and/or Arabic literary sources for at least one episode in *Antioche*, thus that this too was perhaps written in Syria.⁶ In passing, it should be said that a more recent study of the *Chanson des Chétifs*, by Geoffrey Myers, proposes a first version of the *Chétifs* written around Fécamp c. 1160 and attached then or soon after to the *Chanson d'Antioche* of Richard the Pilgrim.⁷

² P. Paris, *Nouvelles Etudes sur La Chanson d'Antioche* (Paris, 1878), p. 35.

³ A. Hatem, *Les poèmes épiques des croisades: génèse – historicité – localisation* (Paris, 1932), pp. 168–9, 339; reviewed by R. Goossens, 'L'épopée Byzantine et l'épopée romane', *B*, 8 (1933), pp. 706–26.

⁴ Goossens, 'L'épopée', p. 706; Hatem, p. 83.

⁵ Hatem, p. 161.

⁶ Goossens, 'L'épopée', p. 725, n. 2; cf. D. Jacoby, 'La littérature française dans les états latins de la Méditerranée orientale à l'époque des croisades: diffusion et création', in *Actes du IXe Congrès Internationale de la Société Rencesvals pour l'Etude des Epopées Romanes 1982* (Modena, 1984), pp. 617–46, at 640.

⁷ G. M. Myers, 'Le développement des *Chétifs*: la version fécampoise?', in Karl-Heinz Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade, première colloque internationale, Trèves 6–11 août 1984*, ZFSL Beiheft 11 (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 84–90.

Claude Cahen, writing in 1940, believed the relationship between Albert of Aachen and the *Chanson d'Antioche* to be less clear-cut; he suggested that there were discernible similarities because Albert recorded the tales told by merchants and troubadours, which also fed the *chansons* – that is, they shared a common source. At this point Cahen believed the *Chanson d'Antioche* was composed in the West, in 'les régions mosanes'.⁸ He was influenced in this, as he later reported, by 'le fait que Albert d'Aix l'avait connue' – a revised opinion he presented in 1957 when Cahen fell in with the judgment of Duparc-Quioc that the *Chanson* was written for a clientèle of lords in northern France.⁹

The most far-reaching analysis of the *Chanson d'Antioche* was undertaken by its editor Suzanne Duparc-Quioc, who identified the material she believed Graindor had taken from Richard the Pilgrim's original *chanson* and that which Graindor added, largely from Robert the Monk, when he reworked it.¹⁰ She believed Albert had used Richard's *chanson* and was sufficiently confident of her case to claim that Albert could be used to 'reconstitute' the primitive *chanson*.¹¹ She claimed that for other passages Graindor used other historians, notably Robert the Monk, but also, on at least one occasion, Albert of Aachen. (This is in relation to Taphnuz the Armenian. Albert describes at separate points his living in the mountains and his advanced age; Duparc-Quioc suggested these references were the source of Graindor's Old Man of the Mountain – 'Li Viels a la Montaigne').¹² The result was a circular argument. It also raised a simple question: if Graindor used written sources for one poem, why not for all three? Neither the *Chétifs* nor the *Jérusalem* has any genuine historical content at all. It seems much likelier that for the *Antioche* and the *Chétifs* Graindor – or the compiler whose existence we postulate in chapter 1 – used earlier epics that he reworked without adding in new historical material. The *Jérusalem* may have been his original composition, plundering characters and plot motifs from the first two poems.¹³

In 1980 Robert F. Cook published a new study of the *Chanson d'Antioche* that questioned Duparc-Quioc's reading of the relationship between the Latin

⁸ C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades* (Paris, 1940), p. 15.

⁹ C. Cahen, 'Le premier cycle de la croisade (Antioche – Jérusalem – Chétifs)', *MA*, 63 (1957), pp. 311–28, at 314, n. 7.

¹⁰ S. Duparc-Quioc, 'La composition de la *Chanson d'Antioche*', *R*, 83 (1962), pp. 1–29, 210–47.

¹¹ Duparc-Quioc, 'Composition', p. 22: 'Dans la troisième partie nous essaierons de voir ce qui reste de l'ancienne chanson de Richard le Pèlerin, en comparant notre texte à la chronique d'Albert d'Aix, qui en a connu un premier état, et à la chanson provençale de Béchada, qui l'a copiée également.'

¹² *Antioche* v. 2457; AA, pp. 188–9.

¹³ See S.B. Edgington, 'Pagans and Others in the *Chanson de Jérusalem*', in Liz James and Sarah Lambert (eds), *Languages of Love and Hate: Conflict, Communication, and Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), forthcoming.

narratives and the *Chanson d'Antioche*.¹⁴ He presented a detailed and forceful case that the *Antioche* was not written until the late twelfth century and can be shown to conform to the rules of epic that prevailed at that time. He pointed out that Richard the Pilgrim cannot be proved to have existed in the late eleventh century; on the contrary, the famous phrase in the *Antioche*, 'Ricans le pelerin de qui nous la tenons', suggests direct transmission rather than long tradition: that is, Richard was a contemporary of the author, and if still alive in the late twelfth century could not have taken part in the First Crusade.¹⁵ Cook claimed that Richard's name was used, in fact, as an epic convention and could quite well have been invented to give authority to the fanciful list of Saracen names that followed it. 'Graindor', too, could be no more than conventional usage. Cook, indeed, was impatient of the attempt to use the *Antioche* as a historical source for the First Crusade and viewed it as a created work; an instrument for the presentation in late twelfth-century Europe of a past already distant and exemplary: a *chanson de geste*.¹⁶ Hermann Kleber endorsed Cook's ideas and showed in some detail that Graindor de Douai could have been the patron who ordered the work.¹⁷

Cook further made the point that the Paris/Duparc-Quioc hypothesis was very convenient because it allowed historians to treat the text as primary evidence or to dismiss it as a later reworking just as they pleased. He pointed out that the greater the degree of correspondence between the *Chanson d'Antioche* and the chronicles, the greater the temptation to say that its truth is 'confirmed', when in fact the information in the *Antioche* could have been drawn from the same sources. Furthermore there is a paradox: we value the *Antioche* as a unique source for a few episodes that are not found elsewhere, but at these very points its veracity is uncorroborated. Cook pointed out that the 'historical' content of the text was to be found in different chronicles, a circumstance that was most easily explained by the writer's drawing on several of them, including Robert the Monk and Albert of Aachen.¹⁸

¹⁴ R.F. Cook, *Chanson d'Antioche, chanson de geste: le cycle de la croisade est-il épique?* (Amsterdam, 1980), pp. 66–75.

¹⁵ v. 9014.

¹⁶ See the review of Cook by H. Kleber, *ZRP*, 99 (1983), pp. 404–6. Trotter also believes there was a propaganda function in these texts dating from the period of the Third Crusade: D. A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100–1300)* (Geneva, 1988), p. 246.

¹⁷ H. Kleber, 'Wer ist der Verfasser der Chanson d'Antioche? Revision einer Streitfrage', *ZFSL*, 94 (1984), pp. 115–42.

¹⁸ Cook, *Chanson d'Antioche*, p. 72. He concluded by suggesting an 'analogie avec la création du texte "clérical" d'Albert [...] Disposant de sources multiples, toutes accessibles en Europe du Nord au dernier quart du douzième siècle, cet auteur [of the *Chanson d'Antioche*] a fait des emprunts à ces sources, desquelles la tradition orale n'est pas du tout exclue d'ailleurs.'

The difficulty with Cook's thesis is that it does not answer the old, but still valid, question as to why the poet, if he had at his disposal all the riches of Albert's *Historia*, selected certain incidents for inclusion and ignored others equally dramatic and colourful, and why he should not have drawn on him at all for the *Jérusalem*.¹⁹

Historical content: a summary

The *Chanson d'Antioche* begins with Peter the Hermit's preaching of the Crusade. Heavy emphasis is laid on his mission to the pope, preaching tour and subsequent defeat at Civetot. Any suggestion that Peter was a poor leader is carefully sidestepped: for example, he leaves Civetot only because begged by the others to take a message to Byzantium. By contrast Urban's speech at Clermont, the starting point of the *GF* and its elaborators and widely quoted elsewhere, is compressed into a *laisse*.

At Constantinople, as later at Antioch, the poet has an independent and admiring view of the Byzantine Taticius ('Estatin') that is strikingly at variance with other sources. At Antioch he is 'Estatin au coeur du lion'. The legendary material that the *Antioche* shares with several sources, including the *GF*, starts outside Antioch with the Iron Bridge: the bridge over the River Far, or *pons ferreus*, became the 'iron bridge' in French.²⁰

The disposition of the crusader forces to try to close the blockade is explained in detail and tallies broadly with knowledge of the terrain and with other accounts, though the poet has invented a couple of gates to accommodate Robert of Flanders (whom he confuses with Robert the Frisian) and the Tafur king. The *Antioche* also gives the position of some of the author's particular heroes, including Raoul de Beaugenci, who is also found in a twelfth-century manuscript of Baudri of Bourgueil.²¹ The preliminary sorties and skirmishes and attempts to tighten the blockade are described with picturesque detail, for example an exploit where a Turkish emir's horse is stolen. As time passes there are particulars of the famine and adverse weather. Expeditions to obtain supplies from St Simeon result in serious losses for the crusaders. During one of these Duke Godfrey slices a Turk in half, a deed commemorated by other historians (though Albert of Aachen, who

¹⁹ Cf. Duparc-Quioic, 'Composition', p. 12.

²⁰ The relationship between Albert's *Historia* and the *chansons* is explored in detail in S. B. Edgington, 'Albert of Aachen and the *chansons de geste*', *The Crusades and their Sources: essays presented to Bernard Hamilton*, ed. J. France and W. G. Zajac (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 23–37.

²¹ The variants are from ms G, BN 5513. Raoul is at p. 47, n. 1. See also S. Duparc-Quioic (ed.), *La Chanson d'Antioche* (2 vols, Paris, 1976–78), vol. 2: *Etude*, pp. 220–25. This same manuscript also records the exploits of 'Raibaudus Grato', the *Chanson's* Raimbals Cretons: Baudri, p. 49, n. 12.

says that he had the story from eye-witnesses, describes a horizontal bisection, whereas the *Antioche* has a vertical cut, in accordance with best *chanson de geste* tradition).

After the battle of the bridge, where this takes place, there is a digression about the Tafurs' cannibalism, which does not occur in any other of the sources we are discussing, though the writers show later at Ma'arrat that they are not squeamish about the subject. The Tafurs and their eating habits are mentioned by Guibert of Nogent.²² There is then some diplomatic to-ing and fro-ing between Garsion (the *Antioche*'s rendering of the governor of Antioch, Yaghi-Siyan) and the crusaders, resulting in the torture of Rainalt Porcet, which is found only in Peter Tudebode.²³ A recurring motif during the crusaders' siege of Antioch is a vignette of Garsion in his palace looking out over the encampment outside the walls; at this point he fears it is a permanency. The 'description' is obviously not from life; it is an effective dramatic device and a reminder that this is a poem, where such a device is appropriate and would not be misread by its audience. Elliptically the poet is saying, 'Just imagine how Garsion must have felt when he looked out over the plains ...'. As a result of his observations, in the poem, Garsion sends to the 'sultan of Persia' his son, Sansadoine (the historical Shams ad-Daulah), to appeal for relieving forces. Sansadoine's difficulties en route are described, and his interview with the sultan – a scene that is closely paralleled, though not duplicated, in Albert of Aachen. It is a long, picturesque and, of course, wholly imaginary scene. In the poem Corbaran's mother makes her first appearance, trying to dissuade him from going to relieve Antioch. At this point in the poem there is a description of a splendid and barbaric statue of Mohammed, which must be wholly imaginary but has a close analogue in RC, where it is among the spoils in the Temple in Jerusalem.²⁴

The capture of Antioch itself is the subject of the next part of the *Antioche*. It is an elaborate tale of a captured infant whose father is prepared to do anything to rescue him, even to convert to Christianity and betray the city, and it is a story also found in Albert of Aachen. Not found in Albert, but paralleled in Fulcher of Chartres is the story of a vision in which the Turk is harangued by God on the subject.²⁵ The *Chanson* gives the name Dacien to the Turkish emir, and Orderic Vitalis, alone among the Latin histories, calls him 'Pirrus Datianus'.²⁶ Stephen of Blois' desertion is accounted for by his being sent to reconnoitre, being overwhelmed by the size of the Turkish army, and feigning sick. He is carried from Antioch in a litter, but once out of sight he legs it to the hills. (This is the sort of embellishment that one would like to believe, and Duparc-Quioic dates it to the

²² GN, p. 146.

²³ PT, pp. 58–9.

²⁴ RC, p. 144.

²⁵ FC, p. 98.

²⁶ OV, pp. 86–7, and n. 4. Orderic generally drew on Baudri of Bourgueil for his information about the First Crusade; this is one of a few episodes not in Baudri.

'original' *Antioche* by the supposed Richard le Pèlerin.) The following scene, when Stephen meets the Byzantine emperor at Philomelion, centres on a character whose historical reality is found not only in the Latin writers, but also in the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena. Guy, son of Robert Guiscard and thus Bohemond's half-brother, whom the *Antioche* identifies elsewhere as Alexios's seneschal, makes a moving plea for the emperor to go to the assistance of the crusaders. Alexios makes a strategic decision, with heavy heart, to turn his back on the crusaders, pausing only to devastate the land of 'Ulgaria' to deprive the Turkish relieving army of supplies. Guy's dramatic intervention – necessarily as fictional as Corbaran's mother's – occurs also in the *GF*, and is elaborated by Robert the Monk, but these authors introduce him as abruptly as a *deus ex machina*, while the author of the *Antioche* has already prepared the ground by having Guy take the crusaders' part at Constantinople during the reception of the leaders. Duparc-Quioç claims the Philomelion story is taken from Robert the Monk, but does not suggest a source for Guy's earlier appearance.²⁷ However, Guy's presence at the imperial court in the 1080s and in 1107/8 is attested by Anna.²⁸ R. Hill's suggestion that Guy's noble speech was a story that reached the crusaders' camp in July to October 1098 seems likely enough.²⁹ Once again, the interdependence of the various accounts is more subtle and complicated than can be explained by a straightforward borrowing from the earlier sources by the later.

The capture of the city takes place a couple of days later. The traitor Turk is becoming desperate: his wife is suspicious and threatens him with exposure, so he throws her from the walls, an episode not found elsewhere. Every ounce of drama is wrung from the escalade, as the crusaders argue about who goes first even as the sun is rising. After they capture the city, as the inhabitants are massacred Garsion takes refuge in the citadel (built by demons a thousand years before). The description of the capture is long and is central to the poem.

Then the crusaders see the cloud of dust that announces the arrival of the Turkish relieving forces and they realize they in turn are under blockade. The Turkish camp is enlivened by the arrival of Corbaran's mother and her prophecies of doom, which are closely paralleled in the *Gesta*. The desperate situation of the besieged is graphically described. The discovery of the Lance is covered in the poem, though not at great length, and the resulting elation seems rather subdued by stormy weather and the firing of the city by Bohemond. It is out of despair rather than vainglory that the embassy of Peter the Hermit to Corbaran is inspired. Most, but not all, of this part of the poem is believed by Duparc to be a direct translation of Robert the Monk, yet there are abundant details, like the chess-game and references to Godfrey's ancestor the swan-knight not to be found in

²⁷ Guy's first appearance is at v. 901. See RM, pp. 158–60, and *Antioche* laisses 285–6 for the scene at Philomelion.

²⁸ *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1969), pp. 188–91, 408–10.

²⁹ *GF*, p. 63, n. 2.

Robert. The failure of the embassy, offering single combat as in Fulcher, makes battle inevitable and the crusaders prepare by a three-day fast. Corbaran's spy Amedelis warns his master, who refuses to believe him.

Finally and splendidly the crusaders, including Bishop Adhemar, armed for the first time in his life, ride out to meet the enemy. They argue about who is to carry the Lance (Adhemar). They argue as to who is to stay and guard the city (Raymond). Besides the leaders and their battalions, the combatants include a battalion of white-haired veterans, one of clerics, the Tafurs, and a battalion of women. According only to the *Antioche* and Orderic Vitalis, Rainald of Toul led a division.³⁰ The battalion of clerics is found in the Baudri variant manuscript, which also includes, uniquely, the *Antioche's* story of Enguerrand of Saint-Pol joking with the bishop of Le Puy: he refuses to allow him to sprinkle him with holy water in case it tarnishes his helmet.³¹ As each rides out Corbaran asks Amedelis who they are and refuses to believe his replies, but when he sees their lines stretching for two leagues he decides to offer combat to the crusaders. This time they refuse. A detailed account of the battle follows, including at last the appearance of the heavenly host, clad all in white and led by Sts George, Maurice, Demetrius and Mercury. The Turks begin to flee and a little later the battle comes to an end.

It remains for the crusaders to count the loot, for the bishop to warn them against boasting and joking about the battle, and for Raymond's men and Bohemond's to squabble about the banner on the citadel. After its surrender the poem ends with the emir speaking of the angel reinforcements who turned the battle.

So how valuable is the *Antioche* as a source for the Crusade?

The aim of this rather long resumé is to separate out the different strands from which the *Antioche* is composed. We argued in chapter 1 that the extant text is based around two chronicles of the Crusade: Albert of Aachen for the first two-thirds, and Robert the Monk for the remaining third. It uses the two in the same way: the storyline forms the basis of the account and some passages are very close to the original, but a large amount of other material is interspersed. The difference is that the author appears to have worked from a different – later and summarised? – version of Albert but the extant version of Robert. Both are used as a framework in which a large amount of additional material is inserted. We do not know for certain where this came from or when; we surmise that it is a mix of family and oral tradition combined with material that formed part of a parallel *chanson de geste* tradition that originated at the time of the Crusade itself. Overlaid on this and accounting for about a third is a stratum of pure fantasy material focusing largely on the Saracens and reflecting the stereotypes of the *chanson de geste*.

³⁰ OV, pp. 110–11 and n. 3.

³¹ BB, p. 76, n. 1.

In general the text reflects a Picard point of view, and specifically highlights the achievements of the St-Pol family.

The text is therefore a compilation of successive strata of source material. It is not an independent eye-witness source for the Crusade. It does contain some elements that are likely to reflect actual episodes and anecdotes. However these cannot be corroborated as historical testimony and must be treated with caution whatever the flavour they appear to give of events.

Historical value: an insight into the thirteenth century

If the *Chanson d'Antioche* has no independent value as evidence for the First Crusade, this does not mean that it is valueless as a source for the later period at which it was compiled or composed. As a literary and secular text, it is important for the insights it provides into the milieu in which it was read and performed – that is, the world of the arms-bearers of Picardy. It tells us a great deal about the attitudes and ideas of its intended audience.

The poem has some unexpected heroes. One of them, Thomas of Marle, or La Fère, lord of Coucy and count of Amiens, is known elsewhere as an out-and-out villain.³² The Saint-Pol family, father and son Count Hugh II and Enguerrand, merit no more than a handful of references in any Latin source, but are major players in the *Chanson d'Antioche*. These characters were, of course, local heroes: their primary seats are less than 60km apart in that same region of France that the *Antioche* was written. The poem also makes much of the heroic and chivalric qualities of Godfrey of Lotharingia. This is less, perhaps, because of the proximity of Bouillon (about 135km from Amiens; Chartres in Normandy is about 200km) than as a tribute to Godfrey's fame as the first ruler of Jerusalem. The *Antioche* marks a stage in Godfrey's posthumous quasi-canonization that culminated in his role as one of the Nine Worthies and a starring part in Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*.³³ This is in contrast to modern historians' evaluation of Godfrey, for example Glaesener's essay entitled, 'Godefroi de Bouillon: était-il un médiocre?' (to which his answer was yes).³⁴ None of the historical leaders acts less than honourably in the *Antioche*: even Stephen of Blois is given some degree of the benefit of the doubt and treated humorously when he absconds from the siege, in contrast to the vilification he receives in other accounts.

There are strong indications as to what motivated these knightly participants, and by inference their descendants who heard the *Antioche*. The depiction of

³² J. S. C. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 156–7.

³³ See above, chapter 1.

³⁴ H. Glaesener, 'Godefroi de Bouillon: était-il un médiocre?', *RHE*, 39 (1943), pp. 309–41.

religion is quite strikingly militaristic.³⁵ This is personified in the leading clerical figure, Adhemar of Le Puy, who is depicted not only encouraging others to fight, and blessing their participation in the battle of Antioch, but orchestrating the whole crusader effort, and even taking to the field himself, bearing arms for the first time in his life.³⁶ He is carrying the Holy Lance miraculously found in Antioch: not only an important relic of the Crucifixion, but also one with soldierly connotations. While emphasizing these religious elements, the poem plays down the pilgrimage goal of the expedition and the associated suffering of the non-combatants, things that were less likely to attract the knightly audience to emulate their forefathers' feats.

The primary focus of the poem is religious, though: it opens with a reference to Jerusalem as the site of Christ's Passion and Crucifixion.³⁷ The goal of the expedition is the Holy Sepulchre, and the crusaders' battle cries are 'Sains Sepucre' and 'Monjoie'.³⁸ The army is referred to as 'God's host', and 'Our Lord's army', and individuals are knights or soldiers of God, repeatedly described as pilgrims.³⁹ They are miraculously assisted by warrior saints.⁴⁰ Death is frequently presented as martyrdom, most strikingly in the case of Rainald of Toul.⁴¹ Yet these manifestations of popular religion overlie more powerful motivational ideas.⁴²

God's message to the barons, conveyed by Peter the Hermit, by Pope Urban II, and by the *jongleur*, is a potent appeal to their secular instincts, couched in religious terms. The prologue contains a direct appeal for vengeance from the crucified Christ.⁴³ The same passage also contains a clear indication that the Holy Land was seen as patrimony: an inheritance from the Father that had been

³⁵ S. B. Edgington, 'Holy Land, Holy Lance: religious ideas in the *Chanson d'Antioche*', *SCH*, 36 (2000), pp. 142–53.

³⁶ vv. 7883–93 for Adhemar carrying the Lance into battle and offering military advice; laisse 306 for his arming as a warrior.

³⁷ vv. 16–18.

³⁸ For 'Montjoie' see, e.g., vv. 565, 1589, 6304. For 'Sains Sepucre' see, e.g., vv. 566, 3088, 6425.

³⁹ See, e.g., v. 1580 for the 'ost Deu'; v. 1122, 'li gentius pules qui le sainte crois porte'; vv. 1131, 'nostre saint pelerine'; and vv. 1147–8 for reference to scrip and staff; v. 1133 'esmu sont por Jhesu'. The words 'crusade' and 'crusader' were not yet in common usage. See C. Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, 1998), chapter 1; M. Markowski, "'Crucesignatus': its origins and early usage", *JMH*, 10 (1984), pp. 157–65.

⁴⁰ Sts George and Demetrius, assisted on occasion by St Mercurius and St Michael. See note above for references.

⁴¹ Laisses 333–4.

⁴² For further exploration of popular religion in the *Antioche*, see Edgington, 'Holy Land', pp. 148–50, and R. Deschaux, 'Le Merveilleux dans la *Chanson d'Antioche*', in *Au carrefour des routes d'Europe: la chanson de geste* (Aix-en-Provence, 1987), pp. 431–43.

⁴³ vv. 157–82, 205–13.

unjustly usurped. The crusade is depicted as a feudal vendetta.⁴⁴ Moreover, God is not only the crusaders' Father; he is their *Seigneur*. It is their duty to extirpate His enemies. The poet recognizes the aspects of crusading that will appeal to his knightly audience.

For this reason, too, the story comes decked in all the trappings of chivalry: glorious feats of arms and heroic episodes of single combat are described in detail.⁴⁵ There are long and loving descriptions of armour and weapons, and we learn more about the appearance of the crusaders' horses than we do of their own physical attributes.⁴⁶ For the knights to shine, they must be pitted against worthy opposition, and it is notable that, although the Muslim enemy is routinely insulted en masse, individual leaders are described in terms that mirror those used of the Christian knights.⁴⁷ They understand the rules of engagement; they have horses and swords they prize as highly as the Christians do theirs; they deserve respect. There are also hints of an awareness of the Muslims' superior learning and civilized standards, for example when Rainalt Porcet is attended by expert doctors within Antioch, or Corbaran makes a miraculous recovery.⁴⁸ On the other hand, there is little effort expended to understand Islam, which is equated with paganism and idolatry.

However, the barons apparently have more in common with their Muslim opponents than with the extraordinary army-within-the-army, the Tafurs. The inclusion of this savage, cannibalistic and virtually autonomous group (they have their own 'king') in the tale is not easily explained, although they undoubtedly had entertainment value. Nor were they an invention of 'Graindor', for they are attested by Guibert of Nogent, writing in the first decade after the crusade.⁴⁹ Whether deliberately or not, they serve to throw the chivalry of the barons and the civilization of their enemy into sharp relief; they also have a displacement function, committing the atrocities the Christian army was known, but could not be acknowledged, to have committed. For the audience of c. 1200, the Tafurs may have represented outlaw figures of their own locality, the wild men of the woods, and pagan rites. They also allow the representation of brutality and excess on Crusade

⁴⁴ J.S.C. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 9, 21, 48–9, 109, 146.

⁴⁵ *Passim*. For a good example see the series of single combats at Nicaea: *laissez* 54–62.

⁴⁶ See, e.g., vv. 2591–7 for armour; vv.3041–7 for description of the champion Saracen steed Fabur.

⁴⁷ M. Bennett, 'First Crusaders' images of Muslims: The influence of vernacular poetry?', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 22 (1986), pp. 101–22. Sansadoine is described in particularly sympathetic terms.

⁴⁸ vv. 4400–401 for Rainalt Porcet; vv.635–7 and 8773–4 for Corbaran miraculously cured of battle injuries.

⁴⁹ GN, p. 146. See L. A. M. Sumberg, 'The "Tafurs" and the First Crusade', *MS*, 21 (1959), pp. 224–46.

in a way that does not implicate the Crusader army itself; it is no coincidence that in the *Canso de la Crozada* Guilhem de Tudela uses the term 'tafur' to refer to the elements in the army who carried out the massacre at Béziers.⁵⁰

Like the Tafurs, women in the *Antioche* have no names, and seem to exist mainly to provide entertainment.⁵¹ Much is made of their assistance in siege and battle, mainly by bringing water to the fighting men. They even form their own battalion to fight in the battle of Antioch, but this is recorded nowhere else and has to have been pure invention. The poem's account must therefore be examined as a fiction and for the light it throws on its writer and intended audience. The women's motivation in actively fighting appears to have been rooted in the notion that their husbands would be defeated and that the fate which then befell them if they stayed in the camp really would be 'worse than death'. Their husbands, however, are put on their mettle when they see the battalion. The idea of emasculating the Saracens by shaving off their beards is put into the mouth of Amedelis, but it represents the husbands' intent. The supposed Turkish reaction is laden with sexual innuendo: 'the blows you will deal out' ('or pensés del ferir'), and Rouge Lion's more explicit, 'I shan't get to enjoy them' ('ne me puis esbaudir'). Corbaran's supposed intention to marry the women off to his nobles is part of the mythology of the enemy as sexual predator.⁵² The passages in the *Chanson* dealing with women are best seen as evidence for male attitudes to women at the time they were written: they are invented scenes that would amuse, entertain and perhaps inspire the knightly audience.

The *Chanson d'Antioche* thus has a particular value for when it was compiled in the early years of the thirteenth century, because it conveys the ideas, attitudes and prejudices of its audience at that time. Unlike the great majority of medieval sources for the Crusades, which were the work of clerics, this is a secular source, and gives an invaluable insight into the *mentalité* of the arms-bearers of north-eastern France.

Conclusion

At the risk of attracting the spectral wrath of Paulin Paris, the *Antioche* cannot be seen as eye-witness testimony to the Crusade. It is an early thirteenth-century *chanson de geste* that preserves successive strata of source material. Tradition and legend deriving in part from previous *chanson de geste* material formed the

⁵⁰ *Crozada* laisse 22.

⁵¹ S. B. Edgington, "'Sont çou ore les fems que jo voi la venir?'" Women in the *Chanson d'Antioche*, in S. B. Edgington and S. Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 154–62.

⁵² Bancourt, *Les Musulmans dans les chansons de geste* (2 vols, Aix-en-Provence, 1982), vol. 2, pp. 661–5.

framework into which extensive material, derived partly from Albert of Aachen at one remove and partly from Robert the Monk, was added alongside exploits by the family of its presumed patrons, the St-Pols. It was tied together by fictional material designed to give it literary coherence as part of a wider work. Among all this there is little reliable source material: at best there are some distant echoes from 1095 that need to be treated with great caution as a guide to actual events.

In a different way, however, it does have historical value. It gives a vivid insight into the perceptions and material culture of the early thirteenth century: the technicalities of making a siege ladder or smashing the way through the gates of an enemy city come startlingly to life. And precisely because of the literary mould in which it is cast it is able to give a dramatic version of reality that is more compelling than the messiness and irresolution of actual events: perception becomes in a way truer than reality. We explore this further in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3

The *Chanson d'Antioche* as Literary Text

The *Antioche* has attracted critical attention as a supposedly unique creation: a *chanson de geste* that takes (relatively) contemporary reality as its subject. Even leaving aside the arguments about Richard le Pèlerin, no other French *chanson de geste* directly portrays recorded historical events in quite this way.

In this chapter we examine three aspects of this interplay between the actual and the fictional. We look firstly at the style and form of the text, arguing that it is beyond doubt a *chanson de geste* and not some hybrid form. We then look at its treatment of historical fact, arguing that, while accuracy takes second place to literary convention, the text creates a hyper-reality that is arguably more 'real' to the reader than simple fact. Finally we examine how far the text constituted a literary innovation in its treatment of the boundary between fact and fiction.

The *Antioche* as thirteenth-century *chanson de geste*: style, form, structure and ethos

Chansons de geste are, at the simplest level, poems about knights. Their defining characteristics are: a focus on the dilemmas and struggles of the feudal system; heroes and characters from the time of Charlemagne, whether in person or in the form of his barons; a minutely detailed focus on the minutiae of warfare; a fictionalized portrayal of Saracens, who are cast as the enemy; and a set of rules governing form, style and versification. They were an immediately accessible portrayal of a world recognizable to its audience.¹

The earliest examples date from the first part of the twelfth century, the most famous being the Oxford text of the *Chanson de Roland*.² However, the majority of extant texts and manuscripts are thirteenth century or later.³ Constant reworking by successive authors is a feature of the genre, both retelling existing stories and adding new episodes, back stories and continuations. This process crossed cultural

¹ The secondary literature on the *chansons de geste* is enormous. For an introduction see M. de Riquer, *Les chansons de geste francaises*, trans. I. Cluzel (Paris, 1957); D. Boutet, *La chanson de geste* (Paris, 1993); F. Suard, *La chanson de geste* (Paris, 1993).

² C. Samaran, 'Sur la date approximative du Roland d'Oxford', *R*, 94 (1973), pp. 523–7.

³ J. Duggan, 'The manuscript corpus of the Medieval Romance Epic', in P. Noble et al. (eds), *The Medieval Alexander Legend in Romance Epic: Essays in Honour of David J. A. Ross* (New York, 1982), pp. 29–42.

and linguistic boundaries. For example there are plausible arguments for a separate Occitan version of the events at Roncevaux in which Oliver acquired by a Saracen princess, Blancheflor, an illegitimate son, Galian, who would play a leading role in the struggle against the Saracens; later echoes of this now lost version can be found in the late thirteenth-century Occitan *chansons de geste Ronsasvals* and *Rollan a Saragossa*.⁴

The *chanson de geste* follows a well-defined set of rules governing style, form, structure and ethos. It exists in a parallel universe of literary convention that refracts rather than reflects reality. In this section we examine the way in which these conventions shape the *Antioche*.

Style

The *chanson de geste* is formulaic in style at a number of levels: vocabulary, syntax and rhetorical techniques. These reflect the much-disputed oral origins of the genre. By the late twelfth century orality was no longer the main way of transmitting texts recounting past heroism, although it continued to exist as part of an increasingly literate society. But the formulaic conventions of oral transmission remained long after the reality had gone.⁵

The vocabulary is largely focused, unsurprisingly, on warfare. The *Antioche* works within these conventions. Thus warhorses frequently have a

⁴ See R. Lejeune, 'Une allusion méconnue à une Chanson de Roland', *R*, 75 (1954), pp. 145–64; J. Horrent, '*Galans a Roncasvals: nouvel examen de l'allusion à la geste sur la bataille de Roncevaux faite dans le fragment Occitan de la Canso d'Antiocha', *R*, 102 (1981), pp. 18–45; *Le Roland Occitan: Roland à Saragosse; Ronsasvals*, ed. and trans. G. Gouiran and R. Lafont (Paris, 1991).

⁵ There is a large literature on oral composition. For starting points see J. Rychner, *La chanson de geste: essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs* (Geneva, 1955). See for further argument M. Delbouille, 'Les chansons de geste et le livre', in *La technique littéraire des chansons de geste: actes du colloque de Liège, septembre 1957* (Paris, 1959), pp. 295–407; R. Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía juglaresca y orígenes de las literaturas románicas*, 3rd edn (Buenos Aires–México, 1949), pp. 332–60; P. Le Gentil, 'La notion d' "état latent" et les derniers travaux de M. Menéndez Pidal', *BH*, 55 (1953), pp. 113–48. For the metamorphosis and coexistence of orality and literacy generally see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1993). For debate on the long crossover between and gradual shift from oral to written in the *chanson de geste*, see P. Zumthor, *Introduction à la poésie orale* (Paris, 1983); W. Calin, 'L'épopée dite vivante: réflexions sur le prétendu caractère oral des chansons de geste', *O*, 3 (1981), pp. 227–37, and J. Duggan, 'La théorie de la composition orale des chansons de geste: les faits et les interprétations', in *O*, 3 (1981), pp. 238–55. For oral topoi in the *chanson de geste*, see e.g. J. Duggan, *The Song of Roland: Formulaic Style and Poetic Craft* (Berkeley, CA, 1973), and comments on performance by G. Brault, *The Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition* (2 vols, London, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 111–15.

'crupe tiulée'; weapons are of gold and enamel; and battlefields are spattered with blood and brains.⁶

Syntactic formulae, where the same sentiment is expressed in the same words a number of times, are a distinguishing feature of the *chanson de geste* and are used throughout the *Antioche*. Broadly speaking they fall into three kinds.⁷ The first are dictated by subject matter: thus the act of putting on armour is described in a series of stock phrases; the night or day is frequently 'bele et clere'.⁸ The second are standard ways of expressing a sentiment or action: thus Saracens faint repeatedly under emotional stress, and victorious Christians are 'baut et lié et joiant'.⁹ The third are different ways of expressing the same action: compare the different descriptions of lance thrusts in the battle of Nicaea.¹⁰ To this might be added stock phrases to fill lines such as 'qui Diex face pardons' or 'por l'or de Montpellier'.¹¹ Some phrases are particular to the *Antioche*: Roger del Rosoie is invariably described as limping, and the repetition of Civetot in the early part of the poem acquires a near-incantatory quality.¹²

One of the perennial debates about the *chanson de geste* is the extent to which this formulaic approach reflects an oral genesis. Duggan suggests that more than 20% of formulae is a marker of oral composition.¹³ Random sampling from passages in the *Antioche* suggests a density of under 10% for the text as a whole, suggesting that it is certainly not orally composed.¹⁴ However, this masks some sections where the density is much higher: in three passages – the battle at Nicaea, the setting up of the siege at Antioch, and the battle of Antioch – it rises to around 25 per cent. It is dangerous to read too much into this. Set-piece descriptions are by definition likely to be formulaic: there are only so many ways to describe a thrust with a lance. But

⁶ vv. 3032, 8865 for 'crupe tiulee'; v. 1657 for golden weapons; vv. 6313–14, 9009 for blood.

⁷ This draws on Sarah Kay's definition of a formula: *Raoul de Cambrai*, ed. and trans. S. Kay (Oxford, 1992), pp. xl–xli, and on Duggan, *Song of Roland*, pp. 10–15.

⁸ For armour see vv. 1268–73, 2592–7, 7690–704; for weather see vv. 420, 499, 2142, 3016.

⁹ vv. 1829, 2850; vv. 1678, 1789, 6565.

¹⁰ vv. 1333, 1343, 1357, 1388–9, 1399–1400, 1407 and 1424 all describe the same action of unhorsing with the lance in different terms.

¹¹ v. 814; v. 1462.

¹² vv. 1179, 2868, 8996 for Roger; vv. 386, 414, 439, 482, 504, 508, 510 for repetition of Civetot.

¹³ Duggan, *Song of Roland*, p. 29.

¹⁴ To produce these percentages we have used Kay's definition of a formula and supplemented it with formulae peculiar to the *Antioche* and "filler" phrases. We have counted the density in vv. 1–1000, 1150–2000, 3000–3500 and 6500–7500 as a referent. We have looked specifically at laisses 51–75 (battle of Nicaea), 127–39 (siege of Antioch), 315–28 (marching out of Antioch) and 333–65 (battle of Antioch) as set-piece descriptions.

some earlier oral version may lie behind these passages, particularly the setting up of the siege at Antioch, which occurs in similar form in AA.

The *chanson de geste* uses a well-defined set of rhetorical techniques.¹⁵ The main ones are similes and hyperbole. The latter is particularly frequent in the *Antioche*: numbers of Saracens run into the hundreds of thousands and battles are the greatest ever seen.¹⁶ Similes, by contrast, are rare, and the few there are generally compare warriors to wild animals.¹⁷

Form and versification

A *chanson de geste* is organized into *laissez*. These are units of varying length, united by a rhyme or assonance, that focus on a particular narrative moment or moments in the text. The function of the *laisse* is to provide a vehicle for the narrative. The story is moved along by a series of *laissez*, each of which depicts a successive episode. Significant moments can be highlighted by a number of techniques, all of which can be found in the *Antioche*. The simplest of these is *enchâînement*, where the beginning of a *laisse* echoes the end of the preceding *laisse*: thus the cannibalism of the Tafurs is suggested at the end of one *laisse* and developed in more detail at the start of the next.¹⁸ *Laissez similaires* repeat an action over two or three *laissez*, portraying one moment from different angles and thereby emphasizing a significant point in the text: typically they start with a similar phrase and follow a similar structure.¹⁹ *Laissez bifurquées* have the same beginning but take the narrative in different directions.²⁰ Sections of the text of particular importance may be marked by a long run of *laissez parallèles*, which have a similar structure and describe the same action from the view of different participants or in different ways.²¹

¹⁵ C. Segre, *Il Boeci, i poemetti agiografici e le origini della forma epica* (Turin, 1955), p. 20; H. S. Kay, 'The nature of rhetoric in the chansons de geste', *ZRP*, 94 (1978), pp. 305–20.

¹⁶ vv. 418, 485–6, 1953–4, 6507 for massive Turkish forces; for immense bravery vv. 8613–16; for extreme reactions 1800–802, 2324, 8900. For metaphor see vv. 9133, 9279.

¹⁷ See, e.g., vv. 8664 for comparison to a lion; 8753 for a leopard; 9133 for a wild boar.

¹⁸ *Laissez* 174–5.

¹⁹ See, e.g., *laissez* 26–8 describing the battle of Civetot; *laissez* 31–3 describing the Christians' departure for captivity. These are key moments both in the narrative and in emotional intensity: the *laissez similaires* create a pause in the narrative to emphasize the moment.

²⁰ Thus *laissez* 121–2: Garsion's grief at the loss of his son acts as the starting point for a description first of Saracen reaction then of Christian reaction to the situation.

²¹ *Laissez* 55–62; 127–39; 307–13; 315–28.

As a general rule, the shorter the *laisse* so the older the *chanson de geste*. Rychner distinguishes narrative from lyric epic: in more recent *chansons de geste* the *laisse* takes second place to narrative momentum, with a looser structure and longer *laissez*.²² The longest *laisse* in the *Antioche* is 110 at 85 lines and the shortest 61 and 131 at 6 lines: the average length is 25.6 lines. There is little differentiation by episode, with the exception of the setting up of the siege at Antioch: here the average length drops to 12.5 lines.²³

Typically the metre is decasyllabic for older *chansons de geste*, dodecasyllabic alexandrines for more recent texts.²⁴ In practice the boundaries are fluid: *Daurel et Beton* starts in alexandrines before switching to decasyllabics.²⁵ By the thirteenth century the alexandrine was overwhelmingly the metre of choice. This is precisely what we find in the *Antioche*, which is written in alexandrines throughout. The 'douze couplets' are also in alexandrines.

As a rule of thumb, older texts tend to use assonance, more recent texts rhyme.²⁶ The *Antioche* is in rhyme with some approximations: for example at *laisse* 111 'perce' in a rhyme scheme based on '-erre', and at 101 'herberge' in a rhyme scheme based on '-re'.²⁷ The table of rhymes shows that endings are overwhelmingly masculine. The exception is the 'douze couplets', which are assonanced and (although it is hard to generalize from only twelve *laissez*) have a majority of feminine rhymes.

The rhyme and metre of the text are therefore typical of the later twelfth- and thirteenth century *chanson de geste*. If there are vestiges of an earlier decasyllabic and/or assonanced version, they are well buried. It is interesting, however, that there are a number of runs of *laissez parallèles* at key moments in the text: the combat at Nicaea, the disposition of forces round Antioch, the debate over who carries the Lance and the battle of Antioch itself: these passages also show a higher

²² Rychner, p. 131; A. Monteverdi, 'La laisse épique', in *La technique littéraire des chansons de geste: actes du colloque de Liège, septembre 1957* (Paris, 1959), pp. 127–40.

²³ By way of contrast the *Guillaume* has 3554 lines in 189 *laissez*; the second part of the *Crozada* (c.1219) has 6811 lines in 83 *laissez*.

²⁴ K. Togeby, 'Histoire de l'alexandrin français', in P. Nyberg and H. Sørensen (eds), *Etudes romanes dédiées à Andreas Blinkenberg à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire* (Copenhagen, 1963), pp. 240–66. While there are incidences of the alexandrine earlier in the twelfth century, it became popular around 1170 in a variety of poetic forms as well as the *chanson de geste*: verse chronicle such as Wace's *Roman de Rou*, ed. A. J. Holden (3 vols, Paris, 1970–73); hagiography in *Guernes de Pont-Saint-Maxence, Vie de St Thomas le Martyre*, ed. E. Wahlberg (Paris, 1936). The *Roland* and the *Guillaume* are both in decasyllabics.

²⁵ *Daurel et Beton*, ed. A. S. Kimmel (Chapel Hill, CA, 1971).

²⁶ P. Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris, 1972), pp. 545–7.

²⁷ For approximate rhyme see C. A. Robson, 'Les origines de la langue littéraire en France: rime approximative et assonance', *Boletim de Filologia*, 19 (1960), pp. 11–27; *Raoul*, ed. Kay, pp. xxvii–xxxv.

density of formulae. They might preserve traces of an earlier version; alternatively this might simply be a way of marking out a major set piece in the text. Their form also suggests that the 'douze couplets' were by a different author.

Narrative structure and techniques

As a very broad generalization, the older a *chanson de geste* so the shorter it is likely to be. The Oxford *Roland* is 4002 lines, *Guillaume* 3559; the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* is 872.²⁸ It has been estimated that an audience could probably absorb about 2000 lines in one session.²⁹ Over time these constraints became less tight and *chansons de geste* acquired greater narrative space and length.³⁰

The *Antioche* does not fall neatly into 2000-line units: it consists of a number of irregularly sized narrative blocks:

prologue: the vengeance of Christ; c.250 lines
 defeat at Civetot: c.600 lines
 departure on Crusade and events at Constantinople: c.250 lines
 Nicaea: c.1800 lines
 Dorylaeum: c.300 lines
 March to Antioch: c.700 lines
 The siege of Antioch and summoning of Corbaran: c.2750 lines
 The fall of Antioch: c.1000 lines
 Siege of Antioch by Corbaran: c. 1100 lines
 Final battle: c. 1900 lines

Two blocks stand out. Events at Nicaea and the siege, fall and battle of Antioch form coherent units in their own right. Both are marked by a large set-piece battle. The ghost of some lost text may lurk behind them.

The *Antioche* has a well-defined structure. It has what could be described as a triple prologue: the justification for the Crusade, defeat at Civetot to set up the *Chétifs* storyline, and the departure on crusade. A major action set-piece follows with the siege, battle and fall of Nicaea. The battle of Dorylaeum is compressed by contrast. The action then builds up to the final set piece of the fall, siege and battle of Antioch, concluding in Hollywood style with an all-action climax. In some ways, events at Nicaea act as a dress rehearsal for events at Antioch.

²⁸ Burgess dates the poem to the mid-twelfth century: *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, ed. G. S. Burgess (New York, 1988), p. xi.

²⁹ Rychner, pp. 48–9.

³⁰ For the effects on composition of the move from orality, see S. J. Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca, NY, 1987).

The narrative is underpinned by links at several levels. The main link characters are Saracen: Corbaran, introduced in the *Chétifs* prologue and the key adversary of the second half of the poem; Garsion, whose increasingly frantic attempts to save his city form a main narrative motor; the faintly comic Soliman, who acts as a kind of Cassandra; and Sansadoine. Corbaran's mother is introduced at the start of the text prefiguring the prophetic role she will play later. The main Christian figures, the leaders of the crusade including Peter the Hermit, do not drive the action in quite the same way, although they are main players throughout. Consistency is also given by the recurrent supporting cast of the St-Pols and others mentioned less frequently such as Thomas of Marle and Wicher the Swabian.

There are thematic links too. The embassy of Soliman's son to the sultan foreshadows that of Sansadoine later.³¹ The council of Clermont is paralleled by the sultan's summoning of the Saracens to the pardon of Mohammed.³² The Crucifixion and consequent vengeance of Christ theme are evoked several times.³³

Narrative devices also provide coherence. The author is blatant about his use of cliffhangers, starting, suspending and interweaving episodes to maintain interest.³⁴ There is also extensive use of cinematic-style montage: this is particularly marked in the preparations for the battle of Antioch, where the marching out of the Christian forces is punctuated by the Saracen reaction.

The persona of the narrator and performance of the text

Whatever the actual circumstances of composition and performance, the stylistic convention of the *chanson de geste* is that it is sung by an entertainer in front of a potentially restless and unappreciative audience who need firm handling. This is reflected in a strong authorial presence and frequent first-person interpolations.³⁵

The text contains these markers of oral convention in abundance. At the most basic level this appears in frequent use of formulae like 'or veissies' and 'or viratz', implying 'had you been there you would have seen' or 'now you can imagine'. These are used to draw attention to particularly striking moments or to let the audience know a good bit is on its way.³⁶ The prologue, with its insistence on the

³¹ Laisses 82–4; he receives a similarly hostile reception (v. 1882).

³² Laisses 35 for Clermont and 213–19 for the Sultan's summoning of forces.

³³ vv. 1624, 3656, 4171–3; 6107–13.

³⁴ A particularly elaborate example is at laisses 164–87: this begins with the story of Rainalt Porcet, halts abruptly in mid-laisse (vv. 3778–9) to focus on Raimbaut Creton, then returns equally abruptly to Rainalt (vv. 3899–901), and uses Rainalt thereafter as the narrative motor to push on the story until his presumed death.

³⁵ Delbouille, pp. 327–36, 347. For typical first-person interventions compare *Couronnement*, vv. 1–11; *Canso d'Antiocha*, vv. 497–501.

³⁶ Compare, drawn at random, *Raoul* v. 2800: 'lors veissiés une dure meslee'; *Antioche* 'voles vos ore oïr que fissent li baron?' v. 1716; laisses 60–2 beginning 'es vos'.

authenticity and value of the text and demanding attention from the audience, is entirely consistent with other *chansons de geste*.³⁷ More generally there is a constant metatextual interplay between audience and author. The author comments on events and characters.³⁸ He addresses the audience directly, attracting their attention, asking them to quieten down or begging for money.³⁹ And he asserts repeatedly the veracity and unimpeachable sources of his text.⁴⁰

This does not prove that the text was orally composed although it does say something about how a performer might memorize it. The thirteenth-century Occitan text *Flamenca* gives a long and somewhat tongue-in-cheek list of the enormous number of texts performed to celebrate Flamenca's wedding (vv. 618–710).⁴¹

Summary

Two conclusions emerge. The first is that the *Antioche* is written firmly within the stylistic conventions of the *chanson de geste*. In Cook's words, 'elle n'est en réalité qu'une chanson de geste cyclique, et elle n'est rien de moins que cela.'⁴² The second is that metre, rhyme, length of *laisse* and use of formulae all point to a later rather than an earlier date for the text as a whole. This does not preclude earlier predecessors. Ghostly traces may persist in the runs of *laissez* describing the battles at Nicaea and Antioch and the setting of the siege at Antioch. The style of the text therefore supports the arguments we have set out above: that the *Antioche* is a *chanson de geste* in a form consistent with thirteenth-century norms.

³⁷ M. Gsteiger, 'Note sur les préambules des chansons de geste', *CCM*, 2 (1959), pp. 213–20.

³⁸ Compare *Roland*, v. 960, 'N'i ad paien de tel chevalerie' ('there had never been such a noble pagan'); *Antioche*, v. 1788: 'Francois ont prise Nique, Dex en soit graciés!'; v. 9350: 'Ne mais Dex aït l'ost par le soie bonté!'

³⁹ vv. 28, 157 for appeals for quiet; vv. 32–4 for a denial the singer is asking for money.

⁴⁰ *Canso*, v. 547, 'so reconta la gesta e es plana vertatz'; *Roland*, vv. 1443, 3262. See also *La Chanson de Roland*, ed. Ian Short (Paris, 1990), p. 264 and note for previous sources; *Antioche*, vv. 66–7, 'Segnor, n'a point de fable ens en nostre cancon / Mais pure verité et saintisme sermon.'

⁴¹ There is some suggestion that epic texts were indeed performed rather than just sung: see Dámaso Alonso, 'Estilo y creación en el poem del Cid', in eodem (ed.), *Ensayos sobre poesía española* (Buenos Aires, 1946), pp. 69–111.

⁴² R. F. Cook, *Chanson d'Antioche, chanson de geste: le cycle de la croisade est-il épique?* (Amsterdam, 1980), p. 86.

The process of transforming reality into a *chanson de geste*

Working within the *chanson de geste* genre meant that events had to be fitted into a clear set of stylistic conventions. Epic 'shapes its own system of relationships, which the data of history must be tailored to fit'.⁴³ The *chanson de geste* deliberately distorts reality for dramatic effect, exaggerating heroism and villainy alike in a parallel universe where Saracens are creatures of the Devil, battles are a set of single combats and helmets are made of (not very durable) gold and jewels. Inevitably, therefore, historical events are refracted through the prism of these conventions. This happens in three ways in the *Antioche*: changes imposed by form; depiction of characters and events in line with *chanson de geste* conventions; and the changes to the narrative needed to situate the text within a wider epic cycle.

Stylistic conventions

Some of the changes dictated by the use of the *chanson de geste* format are stylistic. Characters, horses and weapons acquire soubriquets to fit the rhyme scheme: Saracens have horses allegedly from the Orkneys and swords are 'vienois' in *laisses* rhymed in '-ois'.⁴⁴ Similarly conventions are used almost automatically, such as exaggerated numbers of forces and deaths.⁴⁵

The need to tell a good story requires ruthless selection of material. The *Antioche* alters, repeats, deletes and invents. As Duggan has identified, historical characters mutate into epic ones through amalgamation and name change.⁴⁶ Thus Foucher the orphan, the first into Antioch, is confused with the Fulcher of Chartres attested on Crusade; Robert of Flanders is amalgamated throughout with his father Robert the Frisian; and unhistorical feats are ascribed to historical characters, such as Godfrey's final battle with Corbaran.⁴⁷ A reference found once in the source is

⁴³ S. Fleischman, 'On the representation of history and fiction in the Middle Ages', *HT*, 22 (1983), pp. 278–310, at 295.

⁴⁴ vv. 1288; 1423, 1478.

⁴⁵ vv. 1197, 2118, 8877.

⁴⁶ J. Duggan, 'Medieval epic as popular historiography: appropriation of historical knowledge in the vernacular epic', *GRLMA*, 11/1 (1986), pp. 285–311, at 296–8.

⁴⁷ v. 6062: Fulcher is from Chartres in mss. C and L, from Flanders in the others. Fulcher of Chartres (not the same as the chronicler) is widely attested on Crusade, e.g. RC, p. 91 (calls him Govel); RM, p. 145; RA, p. 47; and Gilo of Paris (*Historia Vie Hierosolimitaneae*, ed. and trans. C. W. Grocock and J. E. Siberry (Oxford, 1997), pp. 164–5) all agree that he was first into Antioch. For Robert see, e.g., v. 8984, 'Robers li quens de Flandres c'on apeloit Frison' and Duparc-Quioc's index to the *Edition* for indiscriminate use of both names. Interestingly the *Canso* is stern about the difference between the two: vv. 10–12. *Antioche*, *laisses* 363–5 for Godfrey's climactic fight.

evoked repeatedly such as the intervention by the saints.⁴⁸ Some key events of the crusade are compressed or deleted: for example Urban's speech at Clermont is passed over in one line in order to emphasize the role of Peter the Hermit.⁴⁹ Other material, possibly deriving from earlier tradition, is invented or at the least heavily embroidered: thus a passing reference to Datien's family is elevated into a saga of distrust and recrimination culminating in his wife's murder.⁵⁰ While the names and itinerary of the Crusade are broadly recognizable, 'la représentation de l'espace est subordonnée à l'élaboration du récit', particularly east of the Holy Land.⁵¹

Changes to reflect the ethos of the *chanson de geste*

The *chanson de geste* exists in a world full of stereotypes generated by the unrelenting focus on war. Just as science fiction has its slant-eyed green aliens and corridors full of convenient air-ducts, so the universe of the *chanson de geste* is populated by Christian warriors who (nearly) always win, Saracens who (nearly) always lose, and luxurious equipment used to inflict vicious slaughter. The mix of ingredients changed over time, with an increasing emphasis on the role of women and a greater mix of fantasy.⁵² Texts were repeatedly retold and rewritten, with the emphasis and choice of episodes reflecting differing preoccupations.⁵³ Yet the underlying mix of ingredients remained constant. The *Antioche* exists squarely within this fictional universe of characters, beliefs, exoticism, and stereotyped Saracens.

Duggan's typology of character roles within the *chanson de geste* defines a range of stock characters⁵⁴ On the one hand there are preservers of the social order: kings and emperors and lesser magnates, heroes and lesser heroes, women, clerics and good/converted Saracens. On the other hand come destroyers: traitors, cowards, Saracens and renegades. All these appear in the *Antioche*: Godfrey and the leaders of the crusade, the barons whose exploits are highlighted, Adhemar and Datien; Stephen of Blois and innumerable Saracens. The only category not found

⁴⁸ *GF*, p. 69; *RM*, pp. 142, 171 both mention the saints at the battle of Antioch: compare *Antioche* vv. 1311, 2179, 2784, 5118–20, 9063–5.

⁴⁹ v. 816, 'illuec fu ... tenus li grans sermons'; by contrast the reaction of the women left behind receives 19 lines (828–46).

⁵⁰ *RM*, p. 145, and Gilo, pp. 166–7, refer to brothers; the wife is present only by implication when Datien hands over his son as a hostage (*RM*, p. 143). *RM* embroiders the account of the *GF* heavily, and it is further elaborated by the *Antioche*.

⁵¹ P. Péron, *Les croisés en orient: la représentation de l'espace dans le cycle de la croisade* (Paris, 2008), pp. 142, 157–9.

⁵² Suard, *La chanson de geste*, pp. 109–10.

⁵³ Duggan, 'Manuscript corpus', p. 31: 'constant change is endemic ... redactions of a song typically differ by recomposition and the addition and deletion of episodes.'

⁵⁴ Duggan, 'Medieval epic', pp. 288–96.

is Christian traitors and apostates, whose presence might have struck a false chord on crusade.

By and large the Christian protagonists of the *Antioche* behave exactly as heroes should.⁵⁵ Godfrey bisects a Turk and fights a climactic battle with Corbaran. There are numerous episodes of heroism by second-rank knights in a variety of circumstances: for example Roger of Barneville giving his life to protect his fellow soldiers; Raimbaut Creton's heroism at the bridge; and Gontier's capturing of the marvellous horse Fabur under the noses of the Saracens.⁵⁶ Heroism is underlined by comparison to other epic heroes. Not only do the protagonists of the First Crusade compare to them in bravery: their heroism becomes part of the wider web of allusion and reminiscence to which every *chanson de geste* belongs, investing the whole enterprise with epic glamour.⁵⁷

This emphasis on heroism leads to a simplification of the complex motives of the crusade. The main characters become one-dimensional heroes, villains or fools. The leaders all have moments of heroism but no distinct personalities; the emperor of Constantinople is always treacherous; Stephen of Blois is a perpetual figure of fun; and Corbaran becomes a stage villain.⁵⁸ The disagreements between the leaders of the Crusade in real life are smoothed away. Discreditable behaviour reported by historians is quietly elided: for example Robert the Monk describes Bohemond nearly ruining the taking of Antioch by arriving late and insinuates that he had spent the night with a woman, whereas the *Antioche* focuses more generally on the cowardice of the crusaders.⁵⁹

Heroism also creates an uncomfortable problem: how to explain atrocities such as cannibalism on an enterprise undertaken with divine approval? This, as well as a liking for local colour, explains the heavy emphasis put on the Tafurs.⁶⁰ Their role is to act out and take the blame for the darker events of the Crusade, especially

⁵⁵ F. Suard, 'Héros et action épiques dans la *Chanson d'Antioche*', in A. Fasso et al. (eds), *Filologia romanza e cultura medievale: studi in onore di Elio Melli* (2 vols, Alessandria, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 763–77.

⁵⁶ Roger in laisse 273; Raimbaut laisses 167–9; Gontier laisses 141–3.

⁵⁷ Thus vv. 8613–16: the climactic battle is compared to Oliver and Roland, Iaumons and Agolant, and the death of Vivien on the Aliscamps. At v. 9225 Godfrey is compared to Bertrand and Aimery of Narbonne.

⁵⁸ A. Leclercq, 'La destinée d'un emir turc: Corbaran, personnage historique, personnage épique', in C. Connachie-Bourgne (ed.), *Façonner son personnage au Moyen Age: actes du 31e colloque du CUERMA, 9, 10 et 11 mars 2006* (Aix-en-Provence, 2007), pp. 201–10.

⁵⁹ RM, pp. 144–5, and introduction, pp. 22–3; *Antioche*, laisses 248–9, is unclear about Bohemond's reason for delay.

⁶⁰ See M. Janet, 'Les scènes de cannibalisme aux abords d'Antioche dans les récits de la croisade: des chroniques à la chanson de croisade', *Bien dire et bien apprendre*, 22 (2004), pp. 179–91; L. Sumberg, 'The "Tafurs" and the First Crusade', *MS*, 21 (1959), pp. 224–46; J. Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusades', *FHS*, 31 (2008), pp. 525–52; A. H. Krappe, 'L'anthropophagie des Tafurs', *N*, 15 (1930), pp. 274–8.

incidents of cannibalism widely reported to have occurred at Ma'arrat. They are carefully differentiated from the knights, portrayed as barely human and answering to their own leader. The fiction of knightly heroism can thus be maintained.

Women are barely mentioned in the sources for the Crusade. To some extent this passive role is reflected in the *Antioche*, with its descriptions of women on the Crusade dying of hunger and the rape of Saracen women at Antioch.⁶¹ However the text takes its cue from the *GF* tradition, via Robert, in two distinctive roles played by women. The first is their intervention in battle. They bring water for the soldiers, with tedious frequency. This is described once by Robert as a factor helping win the battle of Dorylaeum: clearly it caught the imagination of the author(s) of the trilogy, as it is referred to on every possible occasion.⁶² Their other intervention is to constitute themselves as one of the squadrons at the battle of Antioch, something not paralleled in any other source although it recurs in the *Jérusalem* (where they are armed with the inevitable waterbottles). There is, however, no sense that they constitute a serious addition to the army.⁶³ The second role of women is confined to Saracens, who are often portrayed as sorceresses. Corbaran's mother Calabra is a dominant figure in the *Antioche*. While her presence is depicted as early as the *GF*, her depiction is entirely in line with *chanson de geste* convention.⁶⁴

Perhaps the most striking example of reality being rewritten to fit convention lies in the portrait of Taticius. In crusade sources he is portrayed as the high-ranking Byzantine official he was, and usually appointed scapegoat for the problems experienced.⁶⁵ The *Antioche* is alone in transforming him into the nephew of Alexius and a friend to the crusaders. This allows the author to achieve two dramatic effects. The first is to use the convention of uncle/nephew relationship commonly found in the *chanson de geste* as a template for the

⁶¹ vv. 2035–40, 6992–4; vv. 6315–17 and 6413. See S.-G. Heller, 'Surprisingly Historical Women in the Old French Crusade Cycle', in S.S. Poor and J.K. Schulman (eds), *Women and Medieval Epic: Gender, Genre and the Limits of Epic Masculinity* (New York, 2007), pp. 41–66; S. B. Edgington, '"Sont cou ore les fems que jo voi la venir?" Women in the *Chanson d'Antioche*', in S. B. Edgington and S. Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 154–62.

⁶² RM, p. 109 and *Antioche*, vv. 2146–52; thereafter vv. 8308–9, 8937.

⁶³ *Antioche*, laisses 327–8; *Jérusalem* (e.g.) vv. 3310–12, 3486–8.

⁶⁴ *GF*, pp. 53–6; *Antioche*, laisses 278–82. For Saracen women portrayed in literature see P. Sénac, *L'image de l'autre: histoire de l'occident médiéval face à l'Islam* (Paris, 1983), pp. 83–94; for them as sorceresses P. Bancourt, *Les Musulmans dans les chansons de geste* (2 vols, Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1982), vol. 2, pp. 600–620. On Calabra see E.J. Mickel, 'The Latin visions of Calabre and Ida and the origins of the initial branches of the Old French Crusade Cycle', *N*, 88 (2004), pp. 181–8.

⁶⁵ See, e.g., RM, pp. 128–9; AC, pp. 141, 343 for the Byzantine perspective.

relationship between the two.⁶⁶ The second is to emphasize the villainy of Alexius by contrast with Taticius.

The belief system of the *chanson de geste* is firmly rooted in Christianity. Heroes in the *chanson de geste* are clear that they fight for God and God is on their side. Roland's soul, famously, is carried up to Heaven by the archangel Gabriel. Conversely a symbol of the depravity of Raoul de Cambrai is his burning of the convent of Origny.⁶⁷ This ethos runs through the *Antioche*, hardly surprising in a text depicting a crusade. God is evoked constantly in oaths, by invocation and in narratorial comment. The death of Rainalt of Toul is marked by a classic *chanson de geste* scene of Communion with three blades of grass.⁶⁸ There is miraculous help for the Christians.⁶⁹ Rainalt and Godfrey are both given the 'prière du plus grand péril' typically ascribed to the hero of the *chanson de geste* when in danger.⁷⁰

Christian belief is intimately linked to a grammar of violence, however. The key constituents are the detailed description of the warrior and his equipment before battle; the ritualized first combats with lance and sword before the battle becomes one huge mêlée; and graphic depiction of the injuries that result. Battle in the *Antioche* is described in exactly these terms.⁷¹

⁶⁶ See W.O. Farnsworth, *Uncle and Nephew in the Old French chansons de geste: A Study in the Survival of Matriarchy* (New York, 1913).

⁶⁷ Roland, vv. 2389–96. On Raoul see W. Calin, 'Un univers en decomposition: Raoul de Cambrai', Actes du VI^e congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, 1973 (Aix-en-Provence, 1974), pp. 427–37.

⁶⁸ Laisse 334. See W. Sylvester, 'The communions, with three blades of grass, of the knights-errant', *DR*, 121: 23 (1897), pp. 80–98; compare Vivien in *Guillaume*, vv. 2048–51.

⁶⁹ *Antioche*, vv. 3879–85 e.g. for the miraculous rescue of Raimbaut Creton from the river; see B. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 100–1215* (Aldershot, 1982), and J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986) for miracles and the miraculous on Crusade respectively. God helping heroes is a staple of the genre, e.g. *Le Couronnement de Louis: chanson de geste du XIII^e siècle*, ed. E. Langlois, 2nd edn (Paris, 1925), vv. 28–30, 1147–8.

⁷⁰ See Sister M.P. Koch, *An analysis of the long prayers in Old French literature with special reference to the 'Biblical-Creed-Narrative' prayers* (Washington, 1940); E.-R. Labande, 'Le Credo épique à propos des priers dans les chansons de geste', *Recueil de travaux offert à M. Clovis Brunel* (2 vols, Paris, 1955), vol. 2, pp. 62–80; e.g., see *Couronnement de Louis*, vv. 695–789, and compare *Antioche*, vv. 9289–93 (Godfrey) and 4365–71 (Rainalt).

⁷¹ Rychner, pp. 128–30. Compare, e.g., *Raoul*, vv. 3710–13: 'Iluèques fu li chaples maintenus, / Tante anste fraite et perciés tans escus / Tant bon haubers desmailliés et rompus / Li chans jonchiés des mors et des cheus' ('Then and there the close fighting was engaged, with countless lances shattered and shields pierced, countless haubers torn and their mail ripped apart, and the field strewn with the dead and fallen', trans. Kay), with *Antioche*, vv. 8567–70, for the press of battle.

Exoticism and fantasy are apparent throughout the text.⁷² Bohemond and Sansadoine both have prophetic dreams like Charlemagne in the *Roland*.⁷³ There is also the vision leading to the discovery of the Lance, found in other sources.⁷⁴ Time and care is spent describing luxurious *matériel* of war.⁷⁵ When applied to Christian weaponry this sits rather oddly with the extreme privations experienced at Antioch.⁷⁶ Fantasy of another kind comes with wild exaggeration. For example, the horse belonging to the Turk bisected by Godfrey gallops through the streets of Antioch spraying blood from the remaining half of the corpse.⁷⁷ Numbers of combatants are inflated beyond all belief.⁷⁸ The hyperbole can be incongruous: when Garsion injures himself cutting off his beard to save Antioch, the text comments that the fall of Antioch would have been preferable to losing his beard.⁷⁹

A *chanson de geste* about the crusades was hardly likely to minimize the role of the Saracens, and they play a large role in the *Antioche*.⁸⁰ Around a third of the text focuses entirely or mainly on Saracen affairs.⁸¹ The *Antioche*'s Saracen characters are drawn with an individuality and emphasis that their Christian

⁷² R. Deschaux, 'Le merveilleux dans la *Chanson d'Antioche*', in *Au Carrefour des routes d'Europe: la chanson de geste, Xe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, Strasbourg 1985* (Aix-en-Provence 1987), pp. 431–43.

⁷³ *Roland*, laisses 185–6. See H. Braet, 'Le songe dans la chanson de geste au XIIe siècle', *RG*, 15 (1978); J.-C. Vallecalle, 'Sacraliser la guerre: remarques sur les révélations surnaturelles dans les chansons de geste', in A. Labbé, D. W. Lacroix and D. Quérueil (eds), *Guerres, voyages et quêtes au Moyen Age: Mélanges offerts à Jean-Claude Faucon* (Paris, 2000), pp. 429–37. For Bohemond laisse 235; Sansadoine laisse 270.

⁷⁴ Laisses 287–9; see *RM*, pp. 161–3; *GF*, pp. 59–60; *RA*, pp. 51–7; *RC*, pp. 118–21. On the discovery of the Lance see S. Runciman, 'The Holy Lance found at Antioch', *AB*, 68 (1950), pp. 197–209; C. Morris, 'Policy and visions: the case of the Holy Lance in Antioch', in J. Gillingham and J. C. Holt (eds), *War and Government in the Middle Ages: essays in honour of J. D. Prestwich* (Woodbridge, 1984), pp. 33–45.

⁷⁵ Compare *Raoul*, vv. 311–17, and *Antioche*, vv. 4164–8, for a sword made by Wayland; *Roland*, v. 1373, for a saddle ornamented with gold and gems. See, e.g., *Antioche*, vv. 4666–7 or v. 8099, for a gold and enamel helmet; v. 7984 for gold and silver ornamented shields; v. 8167 for silk banners.

⁷⁶ Vividly portrayed, e.g. in the description of famine at vv. 6976–96.

⁷⁷ vv. 3690–700.

⁷⁸ E.g. in laisse 209 Soliman claims to have fielded 900,000 troops at Dorylaeum. On numbers in the *chanson de geste* see J. Flori, 'Un problème de methodologie: la valeur des nombres chez les chroniqueurs du Moyen Age (A propos des effectifs de la première croisade)', *MA*, 99 (1993), pp. 399–422.

⁷⁹ vv. 4644–50.

⁸⁰ R. S. Darbishire, 'The Christian Idea of Islam in the Middle Ages according to the *Chanson d'Antioche*', *MW*, 28 (1938), pp. 114–24; more recently Péron, pp. 477–552.

⁸¹ The longest passage is laisses 177–229, recounting the embassy of Sansadoine. Other lengthy passages are Soliman's grief at the loss of Nicaea (76–88), the death of his

counterparts lack. Soliman of Nicaea is portrayed as effeminate, riding on a mule and unable to protect his own interests.⁸² Corbaran by contrast is the anti-hero of the text. He first appears dramatically from a cloud of dust in a fine build-up of tension, and we last see him in a final showdown with his Christian counterpart Godfrey.⁸³ The Saracens in fact provide the narrative motor for the entire trilogy. The death of Brohadas is the reason for the Sultan's displeasure with Corbaran against which the 'chétifs' defend him; their victory leads both to Corbaran's implied conversion and to their release and triumphant appearance in time to help take Jerusalem, thus removing the shame of initial defeat at Civetot.

That said, the Saracens of the *Antioche* are described in a range of stereotypes entirely consistent with other *chansons de geste* and also chronicles of the crusades.⁸⁴ Their names reflect both stereotypes and Saracen names in other *chansons de geste*.⁸⁵ They are fat, greedy, lazy, effeminate, cowardly and of uncertain parentage. In battle they are treacherous and do not fight like men, and are also accused of unnatural violence. On occasion their otherness is underlined by description in supernatural terms: they are creatures of the Devil who go to Hell when they die. Their gods are similarly cowardly and ineffectual, and a frequent set-piece is their ritual rejection when they fail to deliver protection.⁸⁶ They wallow in luxury, seen particularly in the description of the sultan's court or of Garsion looking out on the Christian forces; this contrasts pointedly with the deprivations

son (119–22), the mockery of Christian weapons and dialogue with his mother (274–83), and the marching out of the Turkish forces (329–33).

⁸² v. 422

⁸³ vv. 6555–71; vv. 9231–50

⁸⁴ On portrayal of Muslims in Crusade chronicles see J. Tolan, 'Muslims as pagan idolaters in chronicles of the First Crusade', in M. Frassetto and D. R. Blanks (eds), *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: perception of other* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 97–117; S. Louchitskaja, 'L'image des musulmans dans les chroniques des croisades', *MA*, 105 (1999), pp. 717–35. On stereotypes in the *chanson de geste*, see M. Bennett, 'First Crusaders' images of Muslims: the influence of vernacular poetry?', *FMLS*, 22 (1986), pp. 101–22, N. Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens: A Re-interpretation of the Chansons de Geste* (Edinburgh, 1984), and Bancourt, *Les Musulmans*. On otherness and the development of the role of Saracens see L. T. Ramey, *Christian, Saracen and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (London, 2001). On the ideology of Christian versus Saracen see J. Flori, *La première croisade: l'Occident chrétien contre l'Islam* (Brussels, 1997), pp. 179–217.

⁸⁵ See J. Dufournet, 'Notes sur les noms des Sarrasins dans la *Chanson de Roland*', *RLR*, 91 (1987), pp. 91–105.

⁸⁶ For examples see, e.g., *Roland* v. 1268 for Saracen souls taken by the Devil; *Couronnement*, vv. 1280–82, and *Roland*, vv. 2580–91, for rejection of Mohammed in defeat. For insults see 'pute jent' vv. 2095, 2158; 'Sarrasin puant', v. 6553, 'orgellous et felon', v. 8652; cowardice and violence, vv. 6713–20; 'encrieme', v. 1638; rejection of Gods, vv. 1805–11, 4897–905; the effete luxury of the sultan, vv. 6827–30.

experienced by the Christians.⁸⁷ They live in luxurious palaces surrounded by gardens.⁸⁸ An important part of their otherness is also exoticism and magic. This is repeatedly stressed in the *Antioche* with, for example, its detailed description of the sultan's tent, the *pardon* of Mohammed and the prophecies of Calabria.⁸⁹

It would be tempting to think that a crusade text might give a more realistic picture of Saracens based on experience.⁹⁰ The emphasis on translators suggests at least some concept of difference.⁹¹ But it is hard to see much evidence of realism in the text, which not only contains the normal stereotypes but takes an almost spiteful delight in mocking Islam. The image of Mohammed is described in great detail, ignoring the fact that Islam does not permit images of the Prophet.⁹² Sansadoine is accused of drunkenness, forbidden by Islam.⁹³ The *Jérusalem* additionally refers to the episode of a drunk Mohammed being eaten by pigs that resembles a story recounted by Guibert of Nogent.⁹⁴

The portrayal of events and characters is thus comprehensively reshaped in line with the conventions of the *chanson de geste*.

Changes reflecting the wider universe of the *chanson de geste*

We have argued above that the extant *Antioche* is not a free-standing text: it is part of the trilogy at the heart of the Cycle, which in its entirety was to emphasize the heroism of Godfrey. This acquisition of a pre- and post-history is as typical of the

⁸⁷ Roland, vv. 2593–4, for luxurious chamber; *Antioche*, laisses 200–201, for luxury enjoyed by sultan of Persia; vv. 4480–84 for Garsion rising late and dressing luxuriously.

⁸⁸ A. Labbé, 'Les jardins de l'Espagne mauresque dans l'imaginaire épique', *Memorias de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, Actes du 11e Congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, Barcelone 22–28 août 1988 (Barcelona, 1990), pp. 385–405.

⁸⁹ Tent: vv. 4866–93, and see S. Friede, 'Un héros et sa tente: la tente du Sultan dans la *Chanson de Jérusalem*', in G. Bianciotto et al. (eds), *L'épopée romane* (Poitiers, 2002), pp. 673–80; *pardon*, laisses 219–23; prophecies, vv. 770–72, 5255–60.

⁹⁰ See Sénac for discussion of how knowledge of Islam developed over time in the West.

⁹¹ I. de Riquer, 'Los intérpretes de la Chanson d'Antioche', *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 43 (1991–92), pp. 313–19.

⁹² vv. 4877–93, 5301–8. See J.-P. Martin, 'Les Sarrasins, l'idolâtrie et l'imaginaire de l'Antiquité dans les chansons de geste', in J.-C. Vallecalle et al. (eds), *Littérature et religion au Moyen Âge* (Lyon, 1997), pp. 27–46. RC describes the crusaders pulling down an enormous silver statue in the Temple, deciding that it was of Mohammed rather than Mars or Apollo (p. 144). For the legend of the floating sarcophagus of Mohammed, see Alexandre du Pont, *Roman de Mahomet*, ed. Y.G. Lepage (Louvain, 1977), p. 49.

⁹³ vv. 4939–41.

⁹⁴ *Jérusalem*, vv. 6150–55, and GN, p. 35; compare *Couronnement*, vv. 848–53. At *Antioche*, v. 4074, the Tufurs pointedly compare the Saracen flesh to pork and bacon.

chanson de geste as of the Hollywood prequel and sequel. Like any action movie, a *chanson de geste* needed a hero. Heroes were in turn credited with new exploits; their childhood and ancestry were explored as precursors to their future glory, and their posthumous glory was reflected in their descendants' achievements; their families were brought into the circle.⁹⁵

The *Antioche* is edited to bring it into line with this wider perspective. Godfrey's role is highlighted throughout and he receives the honour of the final combat with Corbaran. His family are similarly treated, with Baldwin's activities at Edessa played down. Baldwin achieved a starring role in the *Jérusalem* even though he was not actually there in reality.⁹⁶

More generally *chansons de geste* exist as part of the wider corpus of epic material with common themes and characters. Heroism is validated and situations illuminated by cross-reference to other heroes. Roland and Oliver are alluded to twice in the *Antioche*.⁹⁷ Charlemagne is evoked as a guarantee of ancestry: Godfrey's parentage is traced back to him.⁹⁸ These references were not only a shorthand way of helping the audience decode the situation in the text: they placed it firmly within the wider fictional landscape of the *chanson de geste*. Conversely the OFCC influenced other *chansons de geste*: the *Enfances Renier* refers to Corbadas and Calabra and *Renaut de Montauban* shows coincidences of theme with the *Jérusalem*.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ M. Heintze, 'Les techniques de la formation de cycles dans les chansons de geste', in B. Besamusca et al. (eds), *Cyclification: The Development of Narrative Cycles in the Chanson de Geste and the Arthurian Romance* (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 21–58, at 24–5: 'par formation de cycles, nous entendons l'harmonisation des récits et des relations de parenté ainsi que celle des traits de caractère et des fonctions des personnes et des lignages dans un groupe de chansons qui toutes ont pour protagoniste ou bien le même héros ou bien des héros différents, qui toutes chantent les prouesses soit du même lignage, soit de lignages différents ...'.

⁹⁶ *Jérusalem*, laisses 122–8.

⁹⁷ Compare, e.g., *Guilhelm Anelier de Tolosa: Guerra de Navarra; Nafarroako Gudua*, ed. M. Berthe, R. Cierbide, X. Kintana and J. Santale (2 vols, Pamplona, 1995), vol. 2, vv. 3340 and 3899, and RC describing Robert of Flanders and Hugh of Vermandois, 'Rollandum dicas Oliveriumque renatos' (trans. p. 53). *Antioche*, vv. 8613, 9093 for Roland and Oliver; 8615 for Vivien.

⁹⁸ v. 7438

⁹⁹ See F. Suard, 'Chanson de geste traditionnelle et épopée de croisade', in *Au Carrefour des routes d'Europe: la chanson de geste, Xe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals, Strasbourg 1985* (Aix-en-Provence, 1987), pp. 1033–73; J. Subrenat, 'Renaut de Montauban en Terre Sainte: une réflexion épique sur le pèlerinage de Jérusalem dans la chanson des 4 fils Aymon', in D. P. and M. J. Schenck (eds), *Echoes of the Epic: Studies in Honor of Gerard J. Brault* (Birmingham, AL, 1998), pp. 223–38.

Real truth and artistic truth

Depiction of actual events in the *Antioche* is thus outweighed by the wish to tell a good story within the conventions of style and content of the *chanson de geste*.¹⁰⁰ However, history's loss is literature's gain. The literary conventions allow a more effective depiction of events, a kind of hyper-reality: 'verisimilitude is not the same as true reporting.'¹⁰¹ The run of *laisses* describing the forces marching out before the battle of Antioch gives form and tension at the critical moment of the text.¹⁰² The pathos of defeat at Civetot is emphasized by *laisses similaires*, the repetition of 'Civetot' and the focus on a small group of individuals and their reactions intercut cinematically with the triumph of their opponents.¹⁰³ Whether or not this depicts actual reality, it captures the highs and lows of the Crusade at a deeper emotional level.

The transmutation of actual event into fantasy in the *Antioche* also, incidentally, gives us some insight into the creation of other *chansons de geste* from events in the Carolingian era.¹⁰⁴ The events need to be far enough in the past: *chansons de geste* that do depict the contemporary such as the Occitan *Canso de la Crozada* do so in realistic terms.¹⁰⁵ However, a century appears to be ample time for that process to take place. Indeed material in Orderic Vitalis suggests that some of it could start to happen within recent living memory – for example, the story of Bohemond and the Saracen princess Melaz.¹⁰⁶ The story needs either to possess or to be given a clear narrative line with heroes and villains, crisis and resolution, although the basic sequence of events remains recognizable.¹⁰⁷ There is an emphasis on the heroic, the legendary, and to some extent the supernatural. And events, even if long ago

¹⁰⁰ See the comments of J. Subrenat, 'Création poétique et histoire: l'exemple du cycle de la croisade', in P. Frantz et al. (eds), *L'épique: fins et confins* (Paris, 2000), pp. 23–38.

¹⁰¹ R. Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation and Reality* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 92.

¹⁰² *Laisses* 315–28.

¹⁰³ *Laisses* 23–30.

¹⁰⁴ Duggan, 'Medieval epic', pp. 298–99.

¹⁰⁵ See *Crozada*, *laisse* 30, for description of the siege of Carcassonne in summer heat with the streets full of the stink of the wounded and heaps of manure with swarms of flies; *laisse* 57 for the surrender of Termes by a garrison afflicted with terrible diarrhoea.

¹⁰⁶ OV, pp. 359–79. See F.M. Warren, 'The enamoured Moslem princess in Orderic Vitalis and the French epic', *PMLA*, 29 (1914), pp. 341–58.

¹⁰⁷ A concept that goes all the way back to Aristotle's discussion of the paramount importance of plot: Aristotle, *Art of Poetry*, trans. W.H. Fyfe (Oxford, 1940). For detailed analysis of the transformation of the Carolingian Autcharius, adversary of Charlemagne, into the Ogier le Danois of the *chansons de geste*, see R. Lejeune, *Les chansons de geste et l'histoire* (Liège, 1948).

or far away, are portrayed in terms of contemporary society.¹⁰⁸ The *Antioche* can be startlingly realistic in its portrayal: constructing a siege ladder out of deerhide is described in minute detail and there is a glimpse of refined leisure in curtained rooms.¹⁰⁹

Where literature and history meet: the *Antioche* and the boundaries of genre

Bender argues that the *Antioche* is a unique text, 'une chronique entre l'épopée et l'hagiographie'.¹¹⁰ It breaks the rules of the *chanson de geste*: that the events should be Carolingian, in a feudal setting, in the past and concern major vassals.¹¹¹ Therefore even if it looks and sounds like one, its subject-matter means that it cannot be one. More recently Mickel has commented that the debate around what did or did not constitute a *chanson de geste* has shifted: the question is no longer whether the *Antioche* is or is not one, but what it tells us about the genre more widely.¹¹² In this section we offer some thoughts on just how far the *Antioche*'s use of *chanson de geste* conventions to depict recent events did constitute an innovation in genre.

The relationship of history to the *chanson de geste*

The boundaries between the *chanson de geste* and history were fluid. A medieval audience saw nothing incongruous in the stylized literary format of the *chanson de geste*'s being used for material perceived as historically accurate: 'the general conventions of narrative literature in the twelfth century were easily applicable to history as it was then understood'.¹¹³ This plays out in several ways.

¹⁰⁸ Duggan, 'Medieval epic', p. 301.

¹⁰⁹ vv. 5762–81; 832–4.

¹¹⁰ K.-H. Bender, 'Les premières épopées de la croisade: de la chronique au roman chevaleresque épique', in K.-H. Bender and H. Kleber (eds), *Les épopées romanes*, *GRLMA*, III.1.2 fasc.5 (1986), pp. 37–56, at 37.

¹¹¹ As defined by Bender in 'Des chansons de geste à la première épopée de croisade. La présence de l'histoire contemporaine dans la littérature française du douzième siècle', *Actes du VIe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals* (Aix-en-Provence, 1974), pp. 485–500.

¹¹² E. J. Mickel, 'Writing the Record: The Old French Crusade Cycle', in P. E. Bennett, A. E. Cobby and J. E. Everson (eds), *Epic and Crusade: proceedings of the colloquium of the Société Rencesvals, British Branch, held at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, 27–28 March 2004* (Edinburgh, 2006), pp. 39–64, at 39–41.

¹¹³ N. F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago, 1977), p. 210.

Firstly, the *chanson de geste* itself was perceived as having a kind of historical authenticity: Orderic Vitalis describes the clerk Gerold entertaining the household of Hugh of Avranches with stories drawn indiscriminately from hagiography, the Old Testament and the *chanson de geste*.¹¹⁴ The worlds of the *chanson de geste* and the monastic chronicler frequently crossed into one another. *Chansons de geste* were at pains to stress the authenticity of their text as historical source by claiming written monastic precedents: *Girart de Roussillon*, for example, is attributed to the monk Sestu.¹¹⁵ Conversely historians used them as source material alongside written and eyewitness accounts.¹¹⁶ Clerics used them to add authenticity to claims: Bédier lists falsified documents in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries apparently authenticated by Roland and Oliver.¹¹⁷ The claims to authenticity at the start of the *Antioche* are entirely in line with those made in other *chansons de geste*, in vernacular and in Latin historiography.¹¹⁸

Secondly, the form of the *chanson de geste* could be used to reflect epic grandeur onto contemporary events. Poetry was an accepted form for accounts of current events, both Latin and (in the Anglo-Norman regnum) vernacular: these ranged from hagiography to the octosyllabic verse chronicles of Gaimar, Wace, Benoit and Ambroise. Some of these experimented with the form of the *chanson de geste*. Wace used its conventions when he wanted to convey majesty. Fantosme used them in parts of his account of the war with the Young King to convey epic grandeur.¹¹⁹ The conventions of the *chanson de geste* were borrowed to set the tone of a text; the texts were not, however, *chansons de geste* as such.

Thirdly, the *chanson de geste* could be used in a form analogous to the chronicle. In Occitania a kind of sub-genre developed that used the *laisse*, metre, rhyme and stylistic conventions of the *chanson de geste* to recount events virtually

¹¹⁴ OV, p. 216.

¹¹⁵ *Girart*, vv. 24–6.

¹¹⁶ The chronicles of Philippe Mouskes and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines draw heavily on epic material: *Chronique rimée de Philippe Mouskes*, ed. F. de Reiffenberg (2 vols, Brussels, 1836–38); *Chronica Alberici Monachi Trium Fontium*, ed. P. Scheffer-Boichorst, *MGHS*, 23, pp. 631–950.

¹¹⁷ J. Bédier, *Les Légendes épiques: Recherches sur la formation des chansons de geste* (4 vols, Paris, 1908), vol. 4, pp. 420–23.

¹¹⁸ For assertions of truth in vernacular history, see P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 151–3, and compare, e.g., Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis*, ed. A. Bell (Oxford, 1960), vv. 6430–76. For Latin historiography, see B. Guénée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1980), pp. 129–45.

¹¹⁹ M. Bennett, 'L'épique dans l'historiographie anglo-normande: Gaimar, Wace, Jordan Fantosme', in Hans van Dijk and Willem Noomen (eds), *Aspects de l'épopée romane: mentalités, ideologies, intertextualités* (Groningen, 1995), pp. 321–30. Johnston observes, 'while Fantosme's preoccupations and presentation are essentially literary, it is surprising how coherent and basically accurate his story ... is' – *Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle*, ed. R.C. Johnston (Oxford, 1981), p. xviii.

as they happened. Three texts of this kind survive: the two parts of the *Canso de la Crozada*, the *Histoire de la Guerre de Navarre* of 1276, and the *Canso d'Antiocha*.¹²⁰ They take the form of the *chanson de geste*, but little of its content. Epic ethos – vast forces, luxurious materiel of war and heroic death in single combat – is replaced by strict realism: forces number tens rather than tens of thousands, knights are ignominiously hanged, and the civil war round Pamplona is fought in the cabbage patches surrounding the walls.¹²¹

So the *chanson de geste* could be used obliquely as a way of conveying historical truth. However, it was a version of history 'conceived ... in literary and poetic terms'.¹²² The universe portrayed had its roots in past reality and was depicted in terms recognizably reflecting the present. But it was a highly coloured, distorted and idealized, or comic-book version of reality. The present could be alluded to in 'a series of imaginative attempts to fit contemporary experience into models from the distant past'.¹²³ But the messiness and conflicting motivations of the contemporary did not sit comfortably with the certainties of the world of the *chanson de geste*. The *chanson de geste* could refract the contemporary: it could not faithfully reflect it. Conversely, where it did describe the contemporary, it could not do so in terms of the genre conventions.

Contemporaries were well aware of these limitations of the *chanson de geste* as a medium for history. Authors were expressing unease with its reliability as early as 1180.¹²⁴ Nicolas de Saint Lis in 1205 commented 'nus contes rimes no est verais'.¹²⁵ Some of this reflected traditional criticism of *jongleurs*, memorably immortalized in Cabrera's *ensenhamen*. Some reflected the inevitable constraints of literary and poetic form: the need to use verse and a set form distorted the author's ability to recount events. But there was also a wider consciousness of the limitations of a form originating from and reflecting the conventions of oral

¹²⁰ The so-called epic letter of the troubadour Raimbaut of Vaqueiras shows some similarities with these texts: *The Poems of the Troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras*, ed. J. Linskill (The Hague, 1964), pp. 299–344.

¹²¹ *Crozada*, vv. 27, 32; *Crozada*, v. 68; *Guerra*, vv. 3734–6, for fighting in gardens; vv. 3100–104 for Arnaut de Marcafava unheroically but understandably nearly fainting at the sight of a stone crushing his foot.

¹²² K. Uitti, *Story, Myth and Celebration in Old French Narrative Poetry 1050–1100* (Princeton, NJ, 1973), p. 67.

¹²³ B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, NJ, 1983), p. 527.

¹²⁴ Bertrand de Bar-sur-Aube in *La Mort Aymeri de Narbonne: chanson de geste*, ed. J. Couraye du Parc (Paris, 1884), vv. 3055–7: 'nus hom ne puet chancon de geste dire / Que il ne mente là où li vers define / As mos drecier et à tailler la rime'.

¹²⁵ *Chronique dite saintongeaise*, ed. A. de Mandach, *Beihefte zur ZRP*, 120 (Tübingen, 1970), pp. 255–332, at 256.

transmission in a society where written texts were increasingly seen as carrying greater authority.¹²⁶

The contemporary in a 'chanson de geste': is the *Antioche* a unique innovation?

The innovation of the *Antioche* does not lie in its use of the form of the *chanson de geste* to convey supposed historical fact. There were after all plenty of precedents for the blurring of borders between fact and poetic fiction, not least the work of Bechada early in the twelfth century. The innovation we see in the *Antioche* is in fact a mirror image: the use of the historical Crusade as subject-matter for a cyclical *chanson de geste*. It is not a chronicle of the First Crusade masquerading as a *chanson de geste*: it is the centre of a whole cycle of *chansons de geste* that takes the First Crusade as its theme.

This tells us something important about the perception of the First Crusade. By this stage the participants were long since dead, although their descendants lived on. The Crusade had become a legend. As such it was sufficiently remote in time, space and perception to be translated into the parallel universe of epic without undue concern for the real course of events. Like Roncevaux or Charlemagne, reality had become fantasy. From now on crusade themes surface in other *chansons de geste*.¹²⁷ The events of the First Crusade grew into an entire cycle, with a hero elevated to the ranks of the Nine Worthies alongside Charlemagne and Arthur: the *matière de la croisade* took its place alongside the *matière de France*, the *matière de Bretagne* and the *matière d'antiquité*.¹²⁸ The only difference was that the journey from actuality to fantasy had taken one century rather than several.

It also tells us something about the purpose of the text. The *chanson de geste* allowed a link to be forged between the heroism of the Carolingian era, the heroism of the Crusade and the audience's present day. By appearing in a *chanson de geste*, the heroes of the First Crusade instantly became epic heroes with the same status as their Carolingian forebears Roland and William. But they were not just heroes: they were ancestors of the audience who had achieved amazing feats in an already legendary past. The audience of the *Antioche* in turn were invited to see themselves as heroes both through the connection to ancestors with familiar local names and by explicit exhortation to emulate them. The events of the crusade merged seamlessly into past and present. In an uncertain present, the past was

¹²⁶ G. M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1993), p. 68: 'orality is gradually displaced to the realm of fiction, error and hearsay.'

¹²⁷ Suard, *Chansons de geste et tradition épique*, pp. 183–205, for crusading themes in *Renaut de Montauban* and *Enfances Renier*.

¹²⁸ Jehan Bodel, *Chanson des Saisnes*, ed. A. Brasseur (2 vols, Geneva, 1989), vol. 1, vv. 6–42.

simultaneously a comforting refuge and a source of inspiration and example. The new form of the *Antioche* explored those uncertainties from the standpoint of epic rather than history.¹²⁹

So it is fair to say that the First Crusade did spawn a unique variant of the *chanson de geste*. But it was not unique because it used the conventions of the genre to create a *chanson de geste vérité*. It was unique in the speed with which the events of the crusade moved from real to legendary and became an appropriate subject for the genre. And this in turn says something about the sheer power of the events of the crusade and their impression on contemporaries.

Conclusion

The *Antioche* is first and foremost a *chanson de geste*, where reality takes second place to the demands of literary form: 'une tradition épico-romanesque qui se cherche et se définit sans jamais devenir méconnaissable'.¹³⁰ It is not an accurate depiction of the events of 1095 to 1099. But it is 'real' in a deeper sense. The chaotic formlessness of real life is shaped into a coherent narrative with heroes and villains, drama, pathos and light relief. The audience are constantly drawn in and invited to imagine themselves as participants. This creates a heightened version of reality.

It is indeed a ground-breaking text. But this was not because it created a new hybrid form between poetry and chronicle: that already existed, and had done so for the Crusade since the early twelfth century in the form of Bechada's work. Its innovation lay elsewhere: in its role as stimulus for the creation of a whole new cycle of heroic and legendary material. The true uniqueness of the *Antioche* is to have created a fourth cycle of heroic achievements alongside those of Charlemagne, Arthur and classical antiquity.

¹²⁹ On these issues see L. Sumberg, 'Au confluent de l'histoire et du mythe: la *Chanson d'Antioche*, chronique en vers de la première croisade', in K.-H. Bender (ed.), *Les épopées de la croisade: Premier colloque international (Trèves, 6–11 août 1984)*, ZFSL – Beiheft 11 (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 58–65.

¹³⁰ R. F. Cook, 'Les épopées de la croisade', in H. van Dijk and W. Noomen (eds), *Aspects de l'épopée romane: mentalités, ideologies, intertextualités* (Groningen, 1995), pp. 93–110, at 103.

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Principles of Translation

The *Chanson d'Antioche* was written for a variety of reasons. It was designed to entertain its audience with the glamour of long-past heroic deeds. It aimed to edify by holding up the example of the heroes of the First Crusade. It was intended to bolster local and regional pride by emphasizing the feats of ancestors of local nobility, even those with a tenuous connection to the crusade, and thereby to please its patrons. A common thread runs through all these: accessibility.

Our principal aim as translators has therefore been the same as that of the author(s): to produce a version that is readable in its own right while being true to the original. As such we hope it will be equally useful to those who want to use it as a source for the Crusade and to those who want it as an accompaniment to help them understand the Old French text.

Conventions used

A thirteenth-century Old French poem written in accordance with a strict set of conventions is far removed from modern English prose, both in style and perceptions. We have therefore adopted the following conventions to help bridge the gap.

There is no equivalent verse form to the rhymed *laisse* in English, and any attempt to replicate one would have cut right across our twin aims of readability and accuracy: so the translation is in prose.

To aid fluency we have treated the Old French with a fairly free hand in two ways. We have structured the often loosely paratactic text by using conjunctions and breaking up sentences so that it is easier for a modern reader to follow. We have also used modern English equivalents for such phrases as ‘ne les doua .ii. pois’ (literally did not give 2 peas for them), choosing to keep the sense (‘were undaunted’) rather than the literal wording. We have, however, sought to avoid anything too colloquial.

The formulaic language of the *chanson de geste* can read slightly oddly in modern English: we have preserved it to some extent by translating similar formulae with similar terms, at the risk of being repetitive. Some phrases resist an idiomatic rendering because they reflect long-vanished conventions. Thus direct address to individuals, such as ‘bel nies’, ‘baron’ or ‘fel gloton’, reflects the realities of the battlefield and negotiation filtered into literary convention: it has no convincing equivalent in modern English and we have therefore translated literally. Oaths to and by God and expressions of religious belief sit uncomfortably in modern English: we have therefore again chosen to render these literally even

though the effect is stilted. Phrases like ‘.v. cens mercis et grés’ or ‘ne vaut une alie’ do not translate well but we have chosen to retain them to avoid doing too much violence to the text. Social gradations are hard to capture: for example, ‘baron’, which can imply valour as well as social rank: we have sought comprehensible modern equivalents.¹

Direct speech in the *Antioche* does not differentiate greatly in style between Christians and Saracens or between noblemen and poor people. All are equally removed from the gritty reality of their real-life counterparts a century earlier; and the Old French does not differentiate in style. We have therefore made no attempt to make soldiers speak the language of the barrack room or nobles that of the palace, although we have allowed a slight element of the *1001 Nights* into our rendering of Saracen fantasy.

Names of crusaders are normally standardized on the forms used by Jonathan Riley-Smith in *The First Crusaders*.² Place names are those used in the *Wisconsin History of the Crusades*.³

We have explained in the Introduction our reasons for using the Duparc-Quioic edition rather than the Nelson edition. While both give the *version ancienne* of the text, the Nelson edition is some 2000 lines longer than its counterpart. This means that our translation of Duparc-Quioic's edition of manuscript A cannot be simply be read across to Nelson's version of manuscript B. However it can be used as a guide to its contents. To make this easier for the reader we have provided an appendix designed to make the translation usable with Nelson's edition. This contains a table putting *laisse* numbers side by side so that the reader can readily move between the two editions. We have also translated the main episodes that appear in B but not in A. To give the reader an insight into the main variations between different manuscript traditions we have also translated a sample of the most interesting (in our view).

¹ See J. Flori, ‘Lexicologie et société médiévale: les “barons” de la première croisade’, *Actes du XIe congrès international de la Société Rencesvals (barcelone, 22–27 août 1988)*, *Memorias de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 21 (1990), 245–73; ‘Lexicologie et société: baron, chevalier, bachelor, meschin, quelques dénominations aristocratiques chez Graindor de Douai et Ambroise’, ‘Qui tant savoit d’engin et d’art’: *mélanges de philologie médiévale offertes à Gabriel Bianciotto*, ed. C. Galderisi and J. Maurice (Poitiers, 2006), 277–90.

² J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997).

³ M. Baldwin (ed.), *The First Hundred Years*: vol. 1 of *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. M. Setton et al. (2nd edn, 6 vols, Madison, WI, 1969–89), pp. 627–66.

Summary

First prologue (laissez 1–14)

The Crusade is introduced (laissez 1–7). The vengeance of Christ theme is outlined, describing the Passion of Christ and the subsequent vengeance of Titus and Vespasian on the Jews in Jerusalem (laissez 8–13). The subsequent fall of Jerusalem to the infidels is alluded to (laisse 14).

Second prologue: the expedition of Peter the Hermit, defeat at Civetot and the captivity of the ‘chétifs’ (laissez 15–34)

Peter the Hermit goes to Jerusalem and is appalled both by the desecration of the Sepulchre and the patriarch’s inability to do anything about it (laissez 15–16). He goes to Rome to explain matters to the pope: the pope summons a force of 60,000 including the ‘chétifs’ (laisse 17). Peter and his army travel via Constantinople to Civetot, unaware that Corbaran has been sent by the Sultan of Persia to extract tribute from a reluctant Soliman and is nearby (laissez 18–20). Their negotiations are interrupted by a messenger who announces the presence of the Christian army (laisse 21). The Christians attack, at first successfully, and chase the Turks to Civetot; they set up camp there for the night (laissez 22–23). The following day begins with the Saracens killing a priest who is saying Mass, a deed that will come back to haunt them (laissez 24–25). Battle rages the whole day, and the Christians find themselves embattled (laissez 26–27). That evening the Turks make matters worse by feasting in front of the famished Christians; Richard of Caumont injures Corbaran, who recovers with the aid of Saracen ointment (laisse 28). That night the Christians agree to the suggestion by the bishop of Forez that Peter the Hermit should return to France and seek help (laisse 29). The following day the Christians, realizing they have been fought to a standstill, accept Corbaran’s offer and surrender although they refuse to apostasise (laisse 30). They are split up and led off into captivity, with the ‘chétifs’ accompanying Corbaran back to Oliferne where his mother Calabra prophesies that they will come to his aid (laissez 31–34).

Third prologue: Peter's journey to Rome and the preaching of the Crusade (laissez 35–37)

Peter tells the pope what has happened. The Council of Clermont is summoned in response (laisse 35). The reaction of the women left behind is recounted in some detail (laissez 36–37).

Arrival at Constantinople, negotiations with the emperor and the journey to Nicaea (laissez 38–50)

The Crusaders arrive at Constantinople: the emperor orders his men to attack them but is dissuaded by a furious Taticius (unhistorically described as his nephew) and the seneschal Guy (historically Bohemond's half-brother); instead, he issues secret orders that nobody should sell food to the Christians (laisse 38). Taticius is furious when he finds this out: having failed to change the emperor's mind he seeks out Bohemond to tell him, and the Christians arm ready to attack: this persuades the emperor to rescind his order about the sale of food (laissez 39–41). Guy the seneschal invites the leaders to come to talks with the emperor, which they agree to do although with some unease; they are reassured by the emperor's interpreter (laissez 42–44). Godfrey heads the delegation, saying that they will become the emperor's men if he assists them, which he agreed to do (laisse 46)); they pay homage although Bohemond and Tancred refuse (laissez 45–47). They are now ferried across into Asia and, accompanied by Taticius, march to Nicaea where Soliman awaits them (laisse 48). The participants are listed (laissez 49–50).

The siege and fall of Nicaea (laissez 51–77)

Soliman covertly leaves Nicaea to go and seek help; on return he is horrified at the sight of the Christian besiegers, and his son reminds him that he should expect vengeance for the priest he killed in the middle of Mass. He sends an envoy into the city in disguise to bolster Saracen morale: the Christians find him, interrogate him, and kill him by catapulting him (laisse 51). The following day the Christians arm and Baldwin Cauderon is given the honour of striking the first blow (laisse 52). Adhemar exhorts the Christians (laisse 53). Battle is now joined in a series of single combats, in turn Baldwin Cauderon, Guy of Porsese, the St-Pols, Tancred Fitzmarquis, Lambert son of Conon, Roger, Walter and Bernard of Domedart, and Eustache of Boulogne (laissez 54–61). Godfrey sends Stephen of Blois to ensure the Turks do not mount a surprise attack; his force is seen by the Saracens, having rather unwisely stood on the skyline (laissez 62–4). Soliman launches an attack, grief-stricken at the reported death of one of his confusing number of sons, and the Christians resist stoutly despite the wavering of Stephen of Blois (laissez 65–71). The main crusading army hear the noise of battle and go to investigate,

meeting Stephen of Blois on his way back; battle is joined and the Christians win, catapulting the heads of the slain into Antioch and sending a large number of prisoners back to the emperor, who responds by sending provisions (*laisse* 72–4). The deaths and burial of Baldwin of Ghent, Baldwin Cauderon and Guy of Porsese are recounted (*laisse* 75–6). The Saracens in Nicaea are now desperate, and Saladin suggests handing the city over to the Emperor rather than the Crusading army: at this moment Taticius fortuitously turns up and the city is handed over (*laisse* 77).

The aftermath; Soliman seeks help from the Sultan (*laisse* 78–89)

Soliman laments intensively and extensively the fall of his city; he makes for Iconium to seek help from the sultan there (*laisse* 77–81). Once he arrives he sends his son ahead as an emissary to the sultan, who is initially unconvinced but then agrees to help (*laisse* 82–4). The discussion between the sultan and Soliman is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger telling them that the Christians are in the valley of Dorylaeum (*laisse* 85–6). Soliman summons his troops and 40,000 set off for Dorylaeum (*laisse* 87–8). There is a reprise of the action (*laisse* 89).

The battle of Dorylaeum (*laisse* 90–101)

Bohemond, Robert of Normandy and Godfrey split off from the rest of the Christian forces to go and look for territory (*laisse* 90–91). The army is attacked (*laisse* 92–4). Tancred's brother William fights heroically but is eventually killed (*laisse* 95–7). A messenger escapes and takes word to Godfrey that help is needed (*laisse* 98). Women bring water to help the fighters, a theme that will recur (*laisse* 99). The Turks now flee and the perennial figure of fun Soliman laments his fortune yet again (*laisse* 100). Adhemar preaches a sermon (*laisse* 101).

Diversion to Tarsus (*laisse* 102–13)

Bohemond now turns aside (unhistorically) for Tarsus (*laisse* 102). Soliman, the eternal loser, also makes for Tarsus as a refuge (*laisse* 103–5). Baldwin now sets off in pursuit of Tancred, who lets him have supplies: the Turks attack (106–7). Tancred takes Tarsus but Baldwin ungratefully steals it from him; outnumbered, Tancred rides on to Mamistra (*laisse* 108). Meanwhile Bohemond has reached Mamistra (*laisse* 109). Bohemond and Tancred take Mamistra: Baldwin now arrives hard on their heels from Tarsus and, Tancred having refused his plea not to attack, goes on the offensive against him until Bohemond reconciles them. Baldwin receives a message from the Old Man of the Mountains and goes to Edessa to marry his daughter and become his heir (*laisse* 110). Tancred is now at Choros;

Godfrey comes after them and catches up with Tancred (laissez 111–12). Baldwin now arrives at Edessa and marries the daughter of the ruler; he then moves on to Artah, which he takes, forcing two of Soliman's confusing number of sons to leap to their deaths from the battlements (laisse 113).

Arrival at Antioch and establishment of the siege (laissez 114–39)

Soliman hears of the death of his sons and kills Gozelon of Montaigu in revenge; he is mourned by his father Lambert, though Adhemar points out that he is now in Heaven. The Crusaders move on to Antioch (laissez 114–16). They hear the prisoners in the towers of the Iron Bridge as they arrive (laisse 117). Adhemar preaches a sermon (laisse 118). Enguerrand finds a ford over the Orontes, meaning that the Christians do not have to fight their way across the bridge to reach Antioch (laisse 119). Enguerrand suggests establishing a blockade and there is a first skirmish in which a son of Garsion is killed; Soliman does not help matters by pointing out to Garsion that he did warn him about the Franks (laissez 120–21). There is an attempted night ambush from the city, which Enguerrand and Thomas of Marle fight off: the Christians take the Iron Bridge and free the prisoners held there (laissez 122–3). Adhemar points out that they need to set a guard, and Godfrey volunteers; as he rides out he finds saints George and Demetrius accompanying him, which frightens the Saracens into flight (laisse 124). Garsion is furious to hear that the towers have fallen and commands Soliman to go foraging so the city can be better garrisoned. Meanwhile there are mutterings of dissent in the Christian camp and an assault on Antioch is planned (laissez 125–6). The Franks now advance to the walls of Antioch and set up camp round the outside, each gate covered by a different contingent (laissez 127–39).

Early skirmishing round Antioch (laissez 140–87)

Battle ebbs and flows beneath the walls of Antioch for the next few months, recounted by means of a number of incidents. Gontier of Aire swims the river and captures a prize Turkish steed, Faburs (laissez 140–44). As hunger starts to take hold, Raymond of St-Gilles leads a foraging party that is attacked by the Turks (laissez 144–5). The Christians attack the main bridge into Antioch but are fought back despite the heroism of Wicher the Swabian, with their siege engine being burnt (laissez 146–50). To defend their position the Crusaders construct a castle, La Mahomerie, which is garrisoned by Tancred (laissez 151–3). Famine becomes an increasingly dominant theme, although Godfrey succeeds in raising morale (laissez 154–8). Bohemond leads an attack but has to be rescued by Godfrey: this is the occasion of Godfrey's 'coup épique' where a Saracen is sliced in half, which demoralizes Garsion in the city (laissez 159–63). There is a further battle at the bridge in which Rainalt Porcet is captured (laisse 164). Many

Turks take refuge on the pillars of the bridge, and are attacked single-handed by Raimbaut Creton (laissez 165–9). Garsion tries to get Rainalt Porcet to apostasize (laissez 170–74). Horrified by the cruelty and cannibalism of the Tafurs, Garsion proposes a truce to bury the dead, which is granted; he enters into negotiations (laissez 175–9). Rainalt Porcet as a hostage is a key part of the bargaining, to be exchanged for Garsion's nephew; however, the nephew is too badly injured to be worth saving, and when in addition the Tafurs break the truce Garsion withdraws from negotiations and tortures Rainalt Porcet to death (laissez 180–86). A further attack on Antioch follows, with Saracen heads being catapulted over the ramparts including (according to ms B, B.N.fr.795) the head of Garsion's nephew (laisse 187).

The embassy of Sansadoine and sending of the Saracen relieving force under Corbaran (laissez 188–227)

Garsion looks out over the Christian forces and realises the seriousness of his position (laisse 188). He sends Sansadoine to the sultan to seek help, bloodily cutting off his beard to send as a token (laissez 189–93). Sansadoine sets off under cover of darkness but is ambushed by Enguerrand of St-Pol; however, Sansadoine escapes and continues his journey, albeit losing much of his retinue (laissez 194–7). He sends a message back to Garsion reassuring him (laissez 198–9). He breaks his journey in Aleppo, where his uncle Ridwan lives (laisse 200). He finally arrives at the sultan's camp at Sarmazane, where he vents his anger on the idol of Mohammed and receives a less-than-enthusiastic reception from the sultan and Corbaran; however, he finally succeeds in convincing them about the danger Antioch is in (laissez 201–5). At this point Soliman arrives with 40 Turks to tell the Sultan all about his defeat at Nicaea, reinforcing the message despite Corbaran's scepticism: this is rather surprising since Soliman has been with the sultan for some time (laissez 206–11). Brohadas, the son of the sultan, volunteers to accompany the attack force (laisse 212). At the suggestion of Hangosion the sultan now writes out to luminaries such as the Caliph of Baghdad and Rouge Lion seeking help (laissez 213–17). Corbaran's mother Calabra arrives (laisse 218). The three royal brothers of Mecca are also summoned and bring an image of Mohammed on an elephant with much noise and festivity (laissez 219–22). The caliph makes a speech rather mirroring that of the pope earlier, and Brohadas is put in Corbaran's charge, to the disquiet of the sultan (laisse 223). Corbaran now sets off for Antioch, stopping to besiege Edessa on the way but lifting the siege on Sansadoine's advice (laissez 224–7).

The betrayal of Antioch by Datien (laissez 228–245)

During an attack fought off by Bohemond, a Turkish child is captured. The Christians shrewdly treat the child well, returning him to his father with miniature weapons and armour (laissez 228–30). The child tells his father of his wish to convert to Christianity and his father seeks out Bohemond (laissez 231–2). Stephen of Blois is sent to reconnoitre: terrified by what he finds, he escapes under guise of illness (laissez 233–4). Bohemond dreams foretelling the fall of Antioch (laisse 235). Garsion now sends envoys seeking a truce, which is granted (laissez 236–7). Meanwhile the Turk is visited by an angel: he sets about making preparations to betray Antioch, constructing an enormous deer-hide ladder (laissez 238–40). Bohemond lays plans to gain control of the city once fallen; meanwhile Corbaran sends an envoy to Garsion announcing his imminent arrival, and Garsion revokes the truce (laissez 241–2). The Turk now seeks out Bohemond and agrees how the city is to be betrayed (laissez 243–4). Datien kills his wife, who has discovered what he plans to do, and hangs the ladder out over the ramparts (laisse 245).

The fall of Antioch (laissez 246–65)

The Christians position themselves for the assault (laissez 246–7). However, once they see the end of the ladder dangling from the ramparts their courage collectively fails: in a farcical passage Bohemond refuses to climb the ladder despite encouragement from an increasingly frantic Datien (laissez 248–9). In desperation Robert of Flanders and Godfrey try to get someone to climb up (laisse 250). Finally an exasperated Robert of Flanders sets off up the ladder himself: this finally encourages a soldier called Fulcher the Orphan to make the attempt, thus becoming the first into Antioch (laissez 251–4). Datien encourages them (laissez 255–6). The Christians now break in; some go in search of Datien's brother, who is decapitated when he refuses support (laissez 257–8). The Christians now spread out across the sleeping city, and massacre the civilians (laissez 259–60). In the fierce street fighting Enguerrand of St-Pol kills Garsion's nephew (laisse 261). Garsion flees as the Tafurs run riot (laisse 262). Death is everywhere as the city finally falls (laissez 263–4). The scene is set for the climactic battle: the Christians carry their equipment and the wounded into Antioch; the remaining Turks take refuge in the citadel high up on the edge of Antioch, from where they will harry the Christians; and with impeccable timing Corbaran arrives to lay siege to Antioch, the besiegers becoming the besieged (laisse 265).

Interval between the fall and the battle of Antioch (laissez 266–74)

The Christians are now shut in Antioch without food and constantly attacked by the Turks who have taken refuges in the citadel (laissez 266–7). Corbaran

now dramatically appears from a cloud of dust (*laisse* 268). Corbaran, warned successively by Soliman, by Sansadoine's dream, and by a messenger, has made his way to Antioch (*laisse* 269–72). The ambush and death of Roger of Barneville are related (*laisse* 273). There is a somewhat odd summary of events so far (*laisse* 274).

Events in the Turkish camp (*laisse* 275–83)

Sansadoine and Corbaran agree how Antioch should be governed once retaken (*laisse* 275). Corbaran mocks some rusty weapons apparently belonging to the Christians (*laisse* 276), sends out letters summoning Saracen leaders (*laisse* 277) and has a long dialogue with his mother Calabria who has foreseen his defeat and advises him to flee (*laisse* 278–83); needless to say, he refuses.

Events in the Christian camp (*laisse* 284–304)

The Christians continue to suffer under the twin pressures of famine and repeated attacks from the citadel (*laisse* 284). Stephen of Blois worsens the situation from afar by telling the emperor of Constantinople that the Crusaders are lost: despite the lamentations of Guy, the emperor decides against sending help (*laisse* 285–6). Famine worsens (*laisse* 287). A series of divine portents ensues: a priest has a vision of Christ, the Virgin and St Peter in the Church of the Virgin (*laisse* 288–90), Peter Bartholomew has a vision of the Holy Lance that is discovered as a result (*laisse* 291), and a comet is seen (*laisse* 292). Increasingly weakened, the crusaders build a wall to stop the attacks from the citadel; when three soldiers are killed and nobody will go to their aid Bohemond sets fire to the city in a literal attempt to smoke the Christians out (*laisse* 293). Adhemar now suggests that an offer of combat with chosen champions rather than a full battle should be made to Corbaran: Peter the Hermit and Herluin volunteer to act as envoys accompanied by an interpreter, but are met with derision by Corbaran and beat a hasty retreat (*laisse* 294–8). Corbaran, flushed with arrogance, plays chess for the heads of the Christian leaders (*laisse* 299). Robert of Normandy becomes unhappy over Godfrey's precedence and has to be tactfully talked round by Godfrey (*laisse* 300–301). Peter reports back on his mission, from which it is clear that the Christians have no option but to fight; Bohemond tests the morale of the army; and Corbaran sends Amedelis to spy on the condition of the Christian forces (*laisse* 302). The episode of Eurvin of Creel, Pierre Postel and the donkey is related as a somewhat odd piece of light relief (*laisse* 303). Amedelis now reports back and, in a recurring theme, Corbaran accuses him of cowardice (*laisse* 304).

The preliminaries to battle (laissez 305–32)

The Christians get up on Friday morning, resolved to fight (laisse 305). Adhemar arms himself in an echo of the warrior bishop Turpin (laisse 306). He successively asks Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Godfrey, Tancred, Bohemond and Hugh to carry the Lance into battle (laissez 307–12). All refuse and Hugh tells Adhemar he should be the one to carry it; Adhemar agrees, while Raymond IV is left to guard the city (laissez 313–14). Adhemar preaches a sermon and the columns march out of Antioch and over the bridge: in turn Hugh, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Godfrey, Tancred, Bohemond, the veterans of the Spanish Reconquista, the Domearts and St-Pols fathers and sons, Adhemar, Peter of Estaenor and Rainald of Toul, the clergy, the Tafurs and finally (to the lip-smacking satisfaction of the Saracens) a column of women (laissez 315–28). Adhemar exhorts the forces; the focus now returns to the Turks with the execution of the Occitan apostate spy and the agreement on the use of a grass fire as a signal to remove the Turks' treasure to safety (laisse 329). Corbaran now loses his nerve and belatedly sends Amedelis to accept the earlier offer of combat by chosen champions: Robert of Normandy scornfully refuses, and Corbaran prepares to fight (laissez 330–32).

The battle of Antioch (laissez 333–61)

The first casualty is the column led by Rainald of Toul, who is killed (laissez 33–4). The Christians now attack, and Robert of Normandy and Godfrey are singled out for mention (laissez 335–7). Hugh and Godfrey go to Bohemond's aid, and Hugh's standard bearer is killed (laissez 338–9). We see successively Hugh, Godfrey, Robert of Flanders and Tancred in battle (laissez 340–43). Robert of Normandy injures Corbaran, who is removed to his tent and recovers with unrealistic speed (laissez 344–6). Brohadas now rides into battle: he is killed by Godfrey, lamented and buried (laissez 347–51). William of Senlis falls (laisse 352). Battle rages and Adhemar encourages the troops (laissez 353–4). The Christian warriors then the Saracen warriors are listed (laissez 355–6). With surprising abruptness two of the main Saracen characters are dispatched in a few lines: Godfrey kills Soliman and Hugh kills Sansadoine (laisse 357). The saints now intervene and Wicher's heroism in bringing down the Saracen standard is described (laisse 358). Corbaran's standard falls; recognising defeat, the grass fire is ignited as a signal (laisse 359). The death of Gerard of Melun and his avenging are described (laissez 360–61).

The aftermath of the battle (laissez 362–74)

Godfrey chases and confronts Corbaran; they fight and Godfrey is badly injured, having to be rescued by the Christians (laissez 362–5). Adhemar again preaches to the army in a slightly baffling sermon (laisse 366). The Christians dine on Saracen leftovers and count the number of animals they have taken as plunder (laisse 367). Garsion now re-enters the story, planning to flee and slips away; however, he is killed and his head taken to Bohemond (laissez 368–70). Negotiations with the Saracens remaining in the citadel follows in which Bohemond triumphs over Raymond IV and wins agreement from the rest of the barons that he should become the possessor of Antioch: the Saracens leave the citadel and depart (laissez 371–4).

The ‘twelve couplets’

Adhemar falls ill and dies (I). He is buried in the cathedral of St Peter and the crusaders split up for the summer: Bohemond stays in Antioch, Godfrey goes to Edessa, Raymond to Tell-Mannas (II). In the fighting there Rainald of Beauvais captures a messenger with a letter promising help from Mecca (III). The Franks take Albara and move on to Ma’arrat, where hunger forces them into cannibalism; in a miracle Christians killed by Saracens are found to have crosses on their chests (IV). The Tafurs are described (V). The Christians use siege engines to take Tell-Mannas then Ma’arrat, where William of Montpellier distinguishes himself (VI–VII). Anselm of Ribemont is killed there by Saracens who have taken refuge in the towers (VIII). The discoverer of the Holy Lance goes through ordeal by fire successfully although he is mobbed afterwards (IX–X). Godfrey is attacked on his way back from Edessa (XI). The Christians continue their march to Jerusalem (XII).

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PART II

Translation

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My lords, some quiet please and less noise if you want to hear a song about glory.¹ No *jongleur* will ever sing you a better one; as well as enjoying it you should value it highly because honest men can find so many good examples in it.² Let me assure you publicly that nobody has ever sung a better one – go and look for one if you wish – on this subject: the Holy City (may it be praised above all), where God allowed His body to be punished and tortured and struck by the Lance and wounded and broken; Jerusalem to those who give it its proper name.³ These new-fangled *jongleurs* who go around singing it have left out the proper beginning, but Graindor de Douai – who has had all the lines brought up to date for us – has no intention of forgetting it.⁴ So now you can hear about Jerusalem, and about those who went to honour the Holy Sepulchre and how they brought together armies from all quarters: they summoned people from France and Berry and its equal the Auvergne, from Apulia and Calabria as far as Barlet on the coast, and beyond even as far as Wales and from innumerable lands whose names I do not know.⁵ Nobody has ever heard of such a pilgrimage. They all found themselves enduring immense suffering – thirst, hunger, cold, sleepless nights and lack of food – for the love of God. In return He would reward them all well and take their souls up to His glory in Heaven.⁶

¹ This and the following laisses use the oral formulae typical of the *chanson de geste*: see J. Rychner, *La chanson de geste: essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs* (Geneva, 1955), p. 14, and Introduction, chapter 3. The phraseology in the first two laisses of the *Destruction de Rome* is near identical: see *La destruction de Rome: d'après le manuscrit de Hanovre IV*, 578, ed. J. H. Speich (Berne, 1988), and Introduction, chapter 1.

² The standard topos of history as a source of exempla: see P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 87–93, for use in vernacular texts. For discussion of claims to authenticity in the *chanson de geste* see Introduction, chapter 3.

³ The vengeance of Christ theme is introduced. See Introduction, chapter 1.

⁴ These lines are one of the slender shreds of evidence for the existence of Graindor de Douai, and as such greatly overworked. The traditional view is that Graindor rewrote an older poem by Richard le Pèlerin, mentioned once at v. 9014. That is not what the text says. It refers only to the beginning of the poem. And the reference to Graindor is ambiguous: we have translated it as referring to Graindor as patron, but it could also be rendered as 'Graindor who has made over all the lines for our benefit', with Graindor as the author. See Introduction, chapter 1.

⁵ Most of these did field crusaders, but the author is more concerned with euphony than authenticity. 'Barlet' (later 'Barletta') is Bari (Italy).

⁶ The poet sets out what by the end of the twelfth century was the standard theology of the Crusade: it was a pilgrimage on which death was rewarded with martyrdom. See H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Martyrdom and the First Crusade', in P. Edbury (ed.), *Crusade and Settlement* (Cardiff, 1985), pp. 46–56.

2

Sirs, now listen, stop chattering, and I shall sing a superb song for you. Please can I ask anyone who would like to start hearing about Jerusalem to move up towards me, and I shall pray to God for him. I am not after anything from my audience, not a palfrey nor warhorse, a fur cloak nor sable nor even as much as a denier (though if anyone does give me anything for the sake of God let him be rewarded for it!). I shall start with the Holy City where God allowed His body to be tortured and punished and struck by the Lance and broken and wounded.⁷ In response the nobles (may God love and favour them) crossed the sea to avenge his suffering. Peter led them there; God made him His messenger.⁸ However, his first expedition ended in disaster – all were killed or captured, with not one recovered, and the only one to escape was Peter, who made his way back home. He then assembled a large force of counts and noble princes. There was Hugh of Vermandois and all his knights; Tancred and Bohemond, the honourable vassals; Duke Godfrey, with many achievements to his credit; the duke of Normandy with Normans and Picards; and the count of Flanders and the Flemish warriors were there.⁹ Once assembled beyond Montpellier,¹⁰ the source suggests they numbered a good 100,000.¹¹ They stormed Nicaea with its sumptuous palace; Edessa; Antioch, well supplied with churches; and then they took Jerusalem, breaching the walls.¹² However, in the process they suffered from lack of food and sleepless nights, pouring rain, blizzards and hailstorms. God rewarded all of them richly by giving their souls glory. This is the start of the best song in the world.

⁷ This early reference to the Holy Lance, the discovery of which was believed to have enabled the crusaders' victory at Antioch, lends dramatic unity to the poem and is linked to the theme of the vengeance of Christ.

⁸ Peter the Hermit. For identification of proper names, and biographical details where known, see the *dramatis personae*.

⁹ The presence of all these leaders is well attested in the primary sources.

¹⁰ Montpellier is a convenient rhyme for laisses ending in -ier. Compare *The Canso d'Antiocha: an Occitan epic of the First Crusade*, ed. C. Sweetenham and L. M. Paterson (Aldershot, 2003), v. 176: 'e du[ra] l'(i) encautz d'aqi a Monpeslier' (and the rout will last from here to Montpellier') [*Canso*].

¹¹ Numbers in the *chanson de geste*, and history generally, are typically exaggerated. See B. Guénée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1980), pp. 179–84, and compare *La Chanson de Guillaume et La prise d'Orange*, ed. and trans. P. Bennett (London, 2000), v. 212, where Deramed has 100,000 men.

¹² This rapid resumé is rather cavalier with the facts. Peter's expedition to the Holy Land in 1096 contained few nobles and many non-combatants. It was wiped out in Asia Minor before the arrival of the noble-led contingents. Peter survived and joined the main army. Note that Pope Urban's role as instigator of the crusade is side-lined in the *Antioche*. Nicaea was not taken by storm, but by negotiation, as is clear later in the poem.

3

The God who raised Lazarus in Bethany and surrendered his body to suffer for us gives true absolution to all those who love him and serve him in good earnest, and confounds those who believe in and worship Apollo and Mohammed.¹³ My lords, there is no fiction in our song: nothing but pure truth and the holiest account.¹⁴ This is where the tale of Peter's expedition begins, of how he went to the Holy Sepulchre and offered up prayers. God appeared to him in a vision as he slept and said, 'Go back to the great country where you live.' He was to carry a letter with his seal for greater credibility, and to tell his people that they should liberate the holy relics imprisoned by the pagans; if they went to avenge him in this way, anyone killed would have remission of sins and dwell in blessed Paradise.¹⁵ You have heard this recounted in another song, but not in rhyme like the version we have: it has acquired a new rhyme scheme and been written down. However, the author who turned it into rhyme did not dare put his name to it in case his audience turned up their noses at it. May God protect his soul and ensure he does not end up in the infernal mansion of Hell!¹⁶

4

My lords, now listen to what Scripture tells us.¹⁷ In God's name remember Him who made us all, and when He had done so placed us in such bliss that we should never have known suffering had it not been for Adam's fall. God sent His Son

¹³ The classic depiction of Saracen gods in the *chanson de geste*. See Introduction, chapter 3.

¹⁴ Truth assertion is another classic topos of historiography. See also Introduction, chapter 3.

¹⁵ Albert of Aachen [AA] seems to be the source for Peter's vision at the Holy Sepulchre: *Historia Ierosolimitana*, ed. and trans. S. B. Edgington (Oxford, 2007), pp. 3–7. The letter was given to Peter by the patriarch of Jerusalem. It became a charter (*cartula*) fallen from heaven in the Rosenfeld Annals (*MGH SS* xvi, p. 101). See E. Blake and C. Morris, 'A hermit goes to war: Peter and the origins of the First Crusade', *SCH* 22 (1984), pp. 79–107 at 93–4. There are faint echoes of this tale in the thirteenth-century Spanish compilation the *Gran Conquista de Ultramar*, ed. L. Cooper (Bogotá, 1979), vv. 186–8: three knights, Aicart of Montmerle, Raymond Pelet and Gondemar of Unixi, make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre and have a vision of an angel ordering them to go to the pope; cf. a similar story in the *De liberatione civitatum orientis liber* of Cafarus de Caschifellone, *RHC Occ* 5, pp. 41–73.

¹⁶ Quite what the precursor poem was, why and when it was put into rhyme, and why the audience was so unappreciative is unclear. This could refer to a predecessor poem, or could be a humility topos about this poem. See Introduction, chapter 1.

¹⁷ Here clearly Scripture. Elsewhere the same word 'escriu' refers to a written source, usually Robert the Monk [RM].

down to Earth to redeem us from Hell. He surrendered His body to be hung on the Cross. Pilate and the Jews all insulted Him and struck Him and spat on Him, and He suffered greatly as St Peter tells us. His love for us was so great nevertheless that He gave us His name: we are called Christians and we call Him Christ. And if we do believe that He suffered for us then we have a duty to remember it. Christians should take the sign of the Cross for His sake and seek revenge on the descendants of the Antichrist, who does not believe in Him or serve Him or love Him or find joy in Him and does everything possible to hurt His followers. It is only right that He should be overthrown and hounded out of the country so it can be left in peace and Jesus take mercy on our souls.

5

My lords, listen to a song of true knightly achievements: it is only fitting that I should tell you about the noble French lords who by force of arms gained celestial life.¹⁸ They had no time for evil or deceit; none harboured so much as an evil thought towards another; there was not a shadow of treachery among them, nor politicking nor envy, while the sin of covetousness was abominated by all: goodness and valour were universally prized and practised.¹⁹ They took Nicaea by force, Edessa and Tiberias,²⁰ and wealthy powerful Antioch. Everything they took was in the name of God and with His help. They conquered Jerusalem, the great and ancient city where God was resurrected when He rose again to life. God did not forget anyone who died there willingly: He raised their souls on high, where they will be remembered every day.

¹⁸ The poem's narrow focus on French participation in the crusade reflects its audience. Normans, Rhinelanders, Flemings, Occitans, and a scattering of other nationalities also took part in the expedition. See [RC], *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, trans. B. S. and D. S. Bachrach, (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 86–7, for a Norman view of Occitan crusaders.

¹⁹ Edifying but unconvincing. The process of idealization began early: see J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 47–52: the Crusade as a 'monastery in motion' was some way from the reality, portrayed in the first-hand sources, of dissension between the leaders (*ibid.*, p. 150).

²⁰ Nicaea was handed over by its garrison to the Byzantines; Edessa fell into Baldwin's hands after some shady dealings, and Tiberias was taken in the first year after the capture of Jerusalem, rather than during the course of the crusade. So this is inaccurate. The poem underlines the concept of divine support for the Crusade: see Riley-Smith, *Idea*, pp. 135–52. For an analysis of how RM developed the theme see *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade*, trans. C.E. Sweetenham (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 48–59.

6

Sirs, listen to a poem well worth praise. We live in a wicked era, full of treachery; there is no true justice; nobody can see his way clearly; there is no man whose faith is strong enough to keep him on the straight and narrow; we have to take every precaution to save our souls; the Devil is near, seeking to seduce us, and we have to take every care to guard against his wiles.²¹ Our Lord asks you to go to Jerusalem to kill and confound the wicked pagans who refuse to believe in God and adore His works or pay heed to His commandments.²² He asks you to help liberate His Cross and Sepulchre; to smash and destroy Mohammed and Tervagant, melt down their images and offer them to Him;²³ to restore the holy churches and minsters;²⁴ and in the process to make short work of getting rid of the tribute [imposed by the pagans] so that no pagan will ever dare demand it again. The noble lords of France did not hesitate. They went to wander through the desert in foreign lands and saved their souls by becoming savages. If anyone willingly allows his body to be broken for God, Jesus King of Glory will not forget him: on the contrary, He will crown him in glory on high.

7

This army, commanded by Our Lord in person, was conceived and brought together by the noble French lords. By God! Those negotiations were well worth while! They conquered and liberated from tribute numerous lands, towns, castles and fortified cities, frequently calling forth the Christian populations and restoring and exalting God's laws. The royal warcry of 'Montjoie!' was heard everywhere,²⁵

²¹ This reflects the tradition of 'contemptus mundi' found in St Anselm and Peter Damian: see A. Vauchez, *La spiritualité du Moyen Âge occidental* (Paris, 1994), p. 43.

²² A reminder that crusades have become numbered expeditions only in retrospect; in the twelfth century crusading was seen as a continuous activity. The exhortatory function of the poem is particularly clear in this *laisse*: the noble audience is enjoined to go and emulate its forebears.

²³ Tervagant was the third of the unholy trinity of Saracen idols in the *chansons de geste*. See H. Grégoire, 'L'étymologie de Tervagant', *Mélanges offerts à Gustave Cohen* (Paris, 1950), pp. 45–56. Islam does not, of course, have idols. See Introduction, chapter 3.

²⁴ It was a staple of crusading rhetoric to talk about churches being desecrated by Saracens in various imaginative ways: compare RM, pp. 79–80, and the supposed letter of Alexius to the Crusaders: H. Hagenmeyer (ed.), *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacrae spectantes* (Innsbruck, 1901), pp. 130–36; trans. and discussed in RM, pp. 215–22.

²⁵ The warcry of the French, rather than the Crusade as a whole: cf. *Roland*, v. 1350, 'Munjoie escriet, co est l'ensegne Carle' ('he shouts "Montjoie", the battle cry of Charlemagne'). See L.H. Loomis, 'L'oriflamme de France et le cri *Munjoie* au douzième siècle', *MA*, 14 (1959), pp. 469–99.

shouted at the tops of their voices on the plains round Nicaea. There were more blows of lance and sword than could be counted and the Saracens took a sound beating. Those [Christians] who died willingly found salvation for their souls in the celestial life they had gained.

8

My lords, for the love of God fall silent and listen so that when you leave this world you will be the better for it. At the time when God was first tortured by the Jews, broken and wounded by nails and the lance, a thief was hung up on His right. His baptismal name was Dimas, and he was a firm believer in God – may he find grace as his reward!²⁶ When he saw the treatment being meted out to Jesus, he addressed Him as one condemned to death: ‘King and Son of the Virgin, in Your boundless pity save us both when You ascend to Heaven. It is only right that You should be avenged for the treatment You have suffered at the hands of these cowardly Jews.’

9

When He heard this, Our Lord turned towards him. ‘My friend,’ He said, ‘the race is not yet born who will come to revenge Me for these sharp spear thrusts. They will come on My behalf and kill the wicked pagans who have repeatedly refused to obey My commandments; they will come to the aid of blessed Christianity, conquer My land and free My territory from tribute. They will be baptised and raised a thousand years from now, and it will be they who seek out and adore the Holy Sepulchre.’²⁷ They will serve Me as I have raised them to do. They will all be My sons, and I shall be their Protector. Their inheritance will be in heavenly Paradise. This day you will be crowned there with Me.’

10

On the other side, the left, hung a thief baptised with the name of Getas. He was a friend of the thief who believed in Jesus. When he saw Jesus racked by such suffering from the nails and lance and bitter draught the treacherous evildoers had

²⁶ The names Gesmas and Dinas are first found in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus: see A. E. Ford, *L'Evangile de Nicodème: les versions courtes en ancien français et en prose* (Geneva, 1973), p. 47. They were well known: e.g. in the Angers Gospel of the end of the ninth century, reproduced in *La France romane au temps des premiers capétiens, 987–1152* (Paris, 2005), pp. 6–7.

²⁷ The First Crusade took place a little over a millennium after the death of Christ.

forced on Him, he spoke out greatly to his detriment. ‘Let’s face it, my friend,’ he said, ‘You are sadly misguided if you think He will help you get out of this situation. He cannot save his own carcass. How will He protect yours? He says we will get help in a thousand years time when the day comes which He has foretold. Meanwhile you and all the others who are expecting the cavalry to appear over the horizon will be lost with no prospect of help. Anyone who expects that promise to come true is a fool.’

11

The thief who did believe then spoke. ‘Alas! How could you say such things about Almighty God! You and I shall hang here in eternal torment because we have constantly wandered and gone astray, denying the Lord of the world who sees all and orders all. Anyone who truly believes in Him need have no fear of ever scenting the poisonous reek of Hell.’

‘My friend,’ said Our Lord, ‘be assured that a new race will come from over the sea to avenge the death of their Father. Not a single pagan will remain between here and the East: the Franks will liberate the whole land. The soul of every man who is taken and killed on this journey will receive My salvation. And your soul will find salvation today at My command, and so will those who believe as you believe.’

12

The soul of the good thief left his body and rose to find a home in Paradise: that was because of his faith in the Son of the Virgin Mary. After this episode from Scripture, shall I tell you exactly what happened next? It was no more than forty years later that the Romans in the form of Titus, Vespasian and all their forces came to the rescue.²⁸ They believed firmly in God the Son of the Virgin Mary, the Heavenly King who rules over all – Heaven and Earth, life and death. When it became known in their country that the earthly body of the Lord God had been wounded and injured and that He had been tortured and broken on the Cross, they were heartbroken at such wickedness. So they summoned their forces from all parts and sought out oxen and bullocks, beasts of burden and ships. They assaulted Jerusalem with full force. The wall toppled before them and they seized the city,

²⁸ The capture of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian was in ce70. The (completely fictional) theme of Roman vengeance for the death of Christ was well known and goes back to the early Middle Ages: for discussion, links to anti-Semitism and references see Introduction, chapter 1.

slaughtered those inside and seized their wealth. The rich lords appropriated a great deal of plunder and gave it to the poor who needed help.²⁹

13

The wall of Jerusalem fell and smashed to rubble, and is still in ruins according to eyewitnesses. The two kings took prisoner the companions of Judas: Pilate and Barrabas, Malcun and Genetra, Trollant and Serbade, Pharaoh, Malcumma, Genie and Escam, Samuel and Ploia.³⁰ It was this gang that sold Jesus, the Son of the Virgin who gave breath to our bodies. Among them was one man who doubted and paid a very high price, losing his life and all his fortune – Thomas, who went to Hell and will remain there forever.³¹ And thus our Lord was avenged, and will be again. Anyone who goes to avenge Him will be well rewarded: he will wear a crown in heavenly Paradise.

14

Now listen to the song and hear all about the magnificent and noble army that set off. I do not think any priest will contradict me when I say that God was betrayed and given over to torment and sold for a mere 30 deniers. The pagans had taken the river Jordan and the surrounding fiefdom; they wanted to put the Cross and the Holy Sepulchre up for sale; indeed they had taken everything (may God confound them!).³² God's patience with the suffering this caused Him was at an end. He sent out letters throughout His noble land, summoning all to come to Him to redeem His lands taken by the stinking race of pagans.³³ They should come immediately

²⁹ The poor becoming rich on crusade is a perennial theme. See Riley-Smith, *Idea*, pp. 41–4, and cf. [GF] *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, ed. and trans. Rosalind Hill (London, 1962), p. 20; *Canso* v. 426, 'tal .m. n'I iran pauper: tuih en venran manen' ('so many thousands will depart for battle in poverty, all will return rich').

³⁰ Appropriately for the companions of Judas, there are 12 anti-apostles; all are still alive 40 years later.

³¹ The story of Thomas being taken by the Romans and sent to Hell for his doubts is not found elsewhere. It is clear in the Gospel of John that Thomas did in fact believe after his doubts (20.24–9). It is possible that he is being confused with Judas since there is a Judas Thomas in the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas; however, the theme was so well known that this seems unlikely.

³² Standard crusade justification: Holy War was justified because the pagans had stolen land that rightfully belonged to God. The poet appeals to the feudal idea of patrimony.

³³ Typical insults: see P. Bancourt for 'les disgraces physiques et les difformités' of the *chanson de geste* Saracen: *Les Musulmans dans les chansons de geste* (2 vols, Aix-en-Provence, 1982), vol. 1, pp. 77–83.

and without delay to avenge Him. Anyone who did so would be rewarded with youthful vigour and would wear a beautiful and noble crown on his head before Him. The soul of anyone who went willingly, provided he did not go back on his word, would be worth as much as the best saint in Otranto.³⁴

15

Now listen to the story we promised: how Peter the Hermit's crusade began.³⁵ He was born in Amiens and lived there; he was loved and served by all around. No man had been born with such an ability to preach sermons since the days when the Holy Apostles preached to this world. He mounted an ass, took scrip and staff, and went straight to the cathedral of St Peter to pray. He then made his way to Bari with his companions. He took passage over the sea like a nobleman and slipped past the Turks and Saracens like a thief: he arrived in Jerusalem on the day of the Annunciation.³⁶ As he lay prostrate making his prayer at the Holy Sepulchre, he was profoundly shocked by what he saw: horses stabled there and other desecrations. He sought out the patriarch and took him to task. 'My friend, what kind of man would allow the Sepulchre of God to fall into such a state? What is your name?'³⁷ The patriarch replied: 'What power do we have to do anything about it, my brother? We pay an enormous tribute to keep a foothold among the pagans, and suffer greatly for the salvation of our souls. So go and tell the Christians that if we do not get help the Holy Sepulchre will soon be lost to Christianity.'

'I shall take that message willingly,' said the hermit.

16

'My lord,' said the hermit, 'perhaps you would like to hear what we intend to do. I shall bring here the warriors of France, the renowned knights, the dukes and the

³⁴ Otranto fits the rhyme scheme.

³⁵ With this *laisse* the first part of the prologue ends and the story of Peter the Hermit begins. Peter did indeed come from Amiens and he led a largely popular force on Crusade before the better-organised official contingents set off; the *Antioche* is perceptive in its analysis of the weakness of Peter's expedition. As in AA, Peter is seen as the dominant figure in starting the crusade movement, rather than Pope Urban; indeed, he commands and the pope obeys.

³⁶ 25 March. If Peter had arrived by a spring passage, this is too early in the year. The message of the Annunciation is echoed symbolically in Peter's message to the pope. For similar technique see RM, p. 53.

³⁷ The patriarch of Jerusalem was Symeon, d. 1099.

counts, the princes and the castellans and the other nobles: this I think is God's will.'

'My friend,' replied the patriarch, 'I applaud what you say but please give me some time to think: I shall give you my views tomorrow morning.'

'I am happy to do as you wish,' replied the hermit. Lord Peter left and went to the Sepulchre. When he had prayed he fell asleep next to it, and the majesty of God appeared to him.³⁸ He spoke in gentle tones: 'Sweet son, flesh of My flesh, I thank you for the good service you have done Me and I am grateful. Go to the patriarch and ask for My seal. Return to France from whence you came, dear brother. Tell My people that the time is near when they should come and help holy Christianity for My sake. I am anxious to see them and have greatly desired their presence. I want them to turn away from the grasp of the Enemy who has set all his snares to entrap them: Paradise is open to them and they will be crowned there.' At that point Peter woke up and God disappeared. Peter was so frightened that he went to the patriarch and told him of his dream [and asked], 'For God's sake explain it to me.' The patriarch responded benevolently: 'You know full well what it means already.' Everything Peter needed to do was agreed. He asked for the seals of God: the patriarch willingly handed them over without question, and then bade him and all his companions farewell.³⁹

17

Lord Peter took his leave and went to the Holy Sepulchre. Once he had prayed, he left the Sepulchre, mounted his donkey and thus left the city. He had considerable difficulty leaving the country. Lord Peter crossed the sea and arrived at Brindisi. He made his way to Rome. Angry and unhappy, he found his way to the pope.⁴⁰ The pope asked what he wanted. Peter told him about his undertaking, and that he had seen the Holy Sepulchre where God was buried turned into a stable for

³⁸ Visions were an accepted way for divine will to be expressed. Raymond of Aguilers [RA], in particular, emphasises visions on Crusade: trans. J. H. and L. L. Hill, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Jerusalem* (Philadelphia, 1968), pp. 68–78 for visions by Peter Bartholomew and the priest Stephen before the battle of Antioch, *ibid.* p. 109 for Anselm of Ribemont having a vision of the dead Enguerrand of St-Pol, and p. 151 for a posthumous vision of Adhemar. The *Antioche* version is close to AA. The *Gran Conquista* also has a divine vision but by Occitan knights rather than Peter the Hermit (book 1, chapters 186–8: vol. 1, pp. 357–62).

³⁹ The tale of Peter's pilgrimage, and his vision, and his meetings with the patriarch all match closely AA (pp. 3–7). However, AA refers to an actual letter from patriarch to pope.

⁴⁰ Pope Urban II, 1088–1099. His depiction here as led by Peter is a sharp contrast to the role he played in reality. See T. Asbridge, *The First Crusade* (London, 2004), pp. 31–9; H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Pope Urban II's preaching of the First Crusade', *H*, 55 (1970), pp. 177–88.

horses, mules and packhorses. The pope was heartbroken when he heard this. 'For God's sake, my lord,' said Peter, 'help the captives whom the Saracens have taken from Jerusalem – liberate the Sepulchre which they have smashed and mistreated.' The pope replied: 'Sweet brother, gentle friend, I am inspired to do as you wish and I shall not fail you as long as I live. Tell me what you want to do. Shame on all those who have besmirched God and his saints for so long!' Peter the Hermit said: 'Send to Paris and command the princes and marshals of France to come and avenge God, saying that He has promised them that anyone who dies there will be taken to Him. Meanwhile entrust to me as many as possible of your noble knights with their shining helmets, and I shall willingly set out ready to avenge God.' The pope granted this, all a-quiver with joy. He promptly assembled his men from all over his lands: they numbered 60,000 according to the written source.⁴¹ Peter was their commander and had supreme power; he was lord over them and overlord and guardian. My lords, the brave Harpin was on this expedition; he was count of Bourges and a powerful lord, but he had sold his lands and territory to the king because his wife had given him no children, either son or daughter.⁴² So were Richard of Caumont; lord John of Alis; Baldwin of Beauvais with the immensely proud countenance; and Arnold his brother who met such a sticky end when he was eaten by a snake on Mount Tigris and was subsequently revenged by Baldwin with his shining sword.⁴³ There were priests and clerics and consecrated bishops; military commanders were distinctly lacking other than a rather motley crew. The pope made the sign of the Cross over them and blessed them. 'My lords, I command you all to obey Lord Peter the Hermit, who will be your guide and leader. He will bring you all in one piece to the race of the Antichrist. Meanwhile I shall send missives to France. I shall summon the king of St Denis in the name of God to send forces to avenge God on his enemies.'⁴⁴ The lords granted the request. Each took his leave. Once the recruits were equipped they set out on the journey and Peter led them with the rest of his troops. Alas! Why did you do this, Peter the Hermit? It was an act of madness not to wait for the French, for your army was

⁴¹ 'si com dist li escrits': the reference is to neither AA nor RM but suggests a written source which was neither.

⁴² Eudes Arpin, count of Bourges. The story that Eudes sold his property to the king is true, but this was before the 1101 expeditions, in which he took part, not in 1096: see [OV] *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols, Oxford, 1969–80), vol. 5, pp. 324–5 and 344–53.

⁴³ Richard, John, Baldwin and Ernoul are not attested in the historical sources. They and Harpin are prominent in the *Chétifs*, so it is probable that their names were included here as part of the plan to link the poems.

⁴⁴ St-Denis is the basilica where kings of France were buried, and stands here for the royal house of France.

killed and your followers roughly handled, led away as captives to the kingdom of Lutis.⁴⁵

18

So Lord Peter set off together with his army. He placed all his trust in the Son of the Virgin. He had precious few knights with him; instead, he had a rather motley group of clerics, bishops and abbots who live in holy orders. They passed through Apulia and Calabria and the Byzantine Empire, not drawing rein until they reached Constantinople.⁴⁶ They crossed over the Arm of St George in a small flotilla.⁴⁷ They made such good time in their daily journeys that in no time they were at Nicaea [and] the hills of Civetot looming up dark against the sky, less than a league-and-a-half from Nicaea. They were all sure they could take it but failed completely; and that led to their suffering a terrible reverse. The Franks set up camp in a meadow. Alas! Why did our noble lords stay there, never to leave again? Catastrophe looms: Corbaran was on his way from the kingdom of Syria with a full 100,000 Turkish pagans.⁴⁸ The sultan, Lord of Persia, had sent him with orders for Soliman of Nicaea to dispatch his annual tribute⁴⁹ – fifteen Syrian mules all laden with bezants and Sclavonian gold and twenty beasts of burden laden with silks from Almeria – since he had not come in person to experience the joys of the Persian court. Corbaran descended on the stronghold of Nicaea. The city was swarming with those he had brought. He billeted his followers in inns and rooms. Corbaran himself took up residence in the mansion of Murgalie: there was no richer pagan all the way to Almeria.

⁴⁵ Standard fantasy Saracen kingdom: see E. Langlois, *Table des noms propres de toute nature compris dans les chansons de geste imprimées* (Paris, 1904), p. 409. It originally referred to the area around Mecklenburg.

⁴⁶ Peter's expedition did not go via Italy but through the Rhineland and Hungary. The *Chanson's* brief and inaccurate account of his journey is a strong argument against direct borrowing, at this point, from AA, who gives much circumstantial detail in book 1.

⁴⁷ An arm of the Bosphorus outside Constantinople dividing Europe from Asia Minor.

⁴⁸ Corbaran: Kerbogha, the atabeg of Mosul, was a main Turkish adversary on the First Crusade. Because of the sheer improbability of the Christian victory in the battle of Antioch, recounted below, the defeated Kerbogha was accorded the status of a pantomime villain, well beyond his actual role. His appearance at this point owes everything to his subsequent image and the construction of the central trilogy of the cycle, nothing to reality: he was not present at the siege of Nicaea. Soliman's failure to pay tribute is a convenient plot device to justify his presence. See Introduction, chapter 3.

⁴⁹ Soliman of Nicaea: the historic Qilij Arslan. One of the three leading Saracens in the *Antioche* and consistently used to provide light relief.

19

Corbaran took up residence in the mansion of Murgalie; that same evening Soliman gave him rich presents.⁵⁰ The next day when dawn broke and the first streaks of day appeared in the sky, Corbaran of Oliferne commanded his emirs to mount their horses and ride out to the fields [outside town]. Picture the Saracens mounting their horses as one to the blowing of bugles and brass horns! Corbaran rode out of the Gate of the Sleepers and halted on a slope overlooking the valley of Civetot. The sides of the valley were glittering with pagan weapons. Soliman of Nicaea and his brave pagans rode out after them in a great display of force. The infidels numbered 150,000. Now our forces are threatened with utter annihilation!

20

It was a beautiful clear day and the heat was already rising.⁵¹ Corbaran of Oliferne was in the middle of the valley.⁵² Soliman arrived on a saddled mule, came up to Corbaran and bowed down to him.⁵³ ‘Tell me what you think, Royal Lord of Oliferne. You have come a long way to seek me out in my own country. Don’t beat about the bush. Tell me why.’ Corbaran responded bluntly. ‘The Sultan has sent me to tell you that he is furious with you for not coming to his nameday party.’⁵⁴ So he orders you to send him a level boatload of pure gold.⁵⁵ If you don’t, he has sworn on his own head to have you strung up by your neck. However things are not as bad as they could have been. After all, you have earned a considerable reputation. Since you have served me well and without any arrogance, now is payback time.’ Soliman bowed low on hearing this.

⁵⁰ A good example of the technique of *laisses enchâînées* to emphasise significant moments: see Introduction, chapter 3.

⁵¹ Epic formula repeated elsewhere. See Introduction, chapter 3.

⁵² The battle that follows is entirely fictional. Peter’s followers were indeed ferried across the Bosphorus and encamped near Civetot (which is not close to Nicaea). However, Peter himself was in Constantinople, negotiating for supplies when groups of hot-headed youths attacked a Turkish fortress and were wiped out by the Turks. The fierce engagement described in the *Antioche* is part of the necessary scene-setting not for this poem, but for the *Chétifs*, which describes the adventures of the knights taken captive.

⁵³ Soliman is recurrently and pointedly shown riding a mule, not a warhorse. This implies his cowardice compared to the Christian leaders, who would certainly not be portrayed riding mules.

⁵⁴ Saint’s nameday rather than birthday: Saracens are depicted in terms of Christian customs.

⁵⁵ The OFCC edition reads: ‘.I. anese torsee’. However, S. Duparc-Quioc’s correction ‘esneche’ is well attested as meaning a small boat (*La Chanson d’Antioche*, ed. S. Duparc-Quioc (2 vols, 1976–78), vol. 1, *Edition*, p. 38); cf. *Guillaume*, v. 1213.

21

Corbaran had descended on the hills of Civetot, which rise from a spacious valley a bow-shot from Nicaea, to arraign Soliman and pass judgement on him: the Sultan Emir had given him full delegation of power.⁵⁶ The forces Corbaran brought with him numbered a good 100,000. Soliman of Nicaea also assembled his forces. They numbered easily 40,000 with not a single foot soldier; every single one carried arms and rode a good fast warhorse. Soliman took immediate steps to appease Corbaran. As his yearly tribute he gave him a packhorse laden down with bezants, jewels and pure gold, and a box of balm from a balsam tree.⁵⁷ But now look – a Turk starts shouting: ‘Alas, my Lord Soliman! You are in mortal danger! Forget all about this parley and stop wasting your time. The Christians have thrown your lands into uproar. They are riding around smashing down your castles – and they will be at the walls of Nicaea before sunset, raising enormous clouds of dust with the tumult of their coming.’ Corbaran bellowed: ‘To arms, gentlemen! By Mohammed my god, there is no way they will leave in one piece.’⁵⁸ Just watch! Every last one of them will be killed and cut to ribbons.’

22

Corbaran of Oliferne ordered the horns sounded, and lost no time in getting his Turks ready for battle. Soliman of Nicaea also commanded his men to take up arms. They estimated their combined forces at some 100,000 Turks. They sent 20,000 Turks out against Peter’s forces. When Harpin of Bourges saw them charging towards him, he spurred on his warhorse at full speed. Richard of Caumont gave his horse its head. Baldwin of Beauvais spurred forward ready to attack with his lance; so did lord John of Alis and Fulk the brave, Arnold of Beauvais who achieved many praiseworthy feats, and the other barons (may Jesus have mercy on their souls!).⁵⁹ They rode to meet the Turks in battle as fast as their horses could carry them. The Turks wheeled round and away from them, not stopping until they drew rein at Civetot. The French chased them as their sworn enemies. Oh God! What an appalling day God had in store for them. Nobody has ever heard of such unfortunate events.

⁵⁶ The author repeats the phrase ‘al pui del Civetot’ insistently so that it forms a *leitmotif* for the events at Civetot. Compare, famously, the *Roland*’s ‘halt sunt li pui’, and see P. Péron, *Les croisés en orient: la représentation de l’espace dans le cycle de la croisade* (Paris, 2008), pp. 401–11.

⁵⁷ ‘Laie’ is a word from Flemish dialect ‘laeye’ meaning ‘box’ (T-L, vol. 5, p. 63).

⁵⁸ Mohammed is of course not a god. See Introduction, chapter 3.

⁵⁹ These are the heroes of the *Chétifs*: the compiler paves the way for the later text.

23

So now the Turks are fleeing and the Franks are hard on their heels. They pursue them past Nicaea into a valley overlooked by the hills looming high above Civetot. It was there that Soliman's column came up behind them, while Corbaran of Olfierne wheeled back and attacked them from the front. There were so many Turks that the summits and slopes were completely covered: that is the plain truth. And so began the terrible agonising battles that made mothers weep with grief for their children. Baldwin of Beauvais gave his mount its head and struck Clarien's glittering shield; he split it completely apart from top to bottom, plunged his razor-sharp spear into his heart, and flung him dead from his horse into a ravine.⁶⁰ And likewise Richard of Caumont threw Roboant dead to the ground; Lord John of Alis killed Estorgant; and Arnold of Beauvais and Fulk of Melun killed hordes of Turks including King Escorfant. Each of our noble lords killed his man although the Turks took their toll with their bows of horn.⁶¹ Just imagine Peter the Hermit and his forces streaming forward, attacking the Turks with knives and axes as they go; the others follow on, taking new heart. The pagans wheeled round and turned tail, not drawing breath until they got back to Civetot: once they were back on the hills they were safe. This was a cunning trick by the wicked cowards.⁶² The day was over and night approached. Our people went to spend the night in the valley of Civetot.

24

It was a beautiful clear night with the moon serene in the sky. Our forces stayed down in the valley of Civetot overnight. The following day as dawn brightened, Corbaran and his forces once again armed themselves; so did Soliman of Nicaea and his multitude of soldiers. The morning will see our forces come under attack; they were too confident in their position – a bad mistake. Butors and Clarifans (curses on them by the body of God!) were spoiling for a fight. They called out to Soliman: 'Just look at the size of that camp down in the valley! These people have just one thing in mind: to ruin and destroy our land!' Soliman replied: 'We shall attack it.' 'I solemnly swear by my flowing beard,' said Corbaran, 'to take

⁶⁰ The classic topos of the *chanson de geste*, the single combat with lance. See Rychner, pp. 139–48, for discussion and analysis.

⁶¹ A standard description of Turkish bows. Bancourt describes them as wooden bows reinforced with horn (*Musulmans*, vol. 2, p. 954); see also T–L, vol. 2, p. 840. Cf. *Anseis von Karthago*, ed. J. Alton (Tübingen, 1892), vv. 2579, 7443.

⁶² Treachery and underhand behaviour are standard Saracen features: see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 281–9. However, feigned retreat was a standard Saracen tactic: cf. Asbridge's comments on the ambush and death of Roger of Barneville (*First Crusade*, pp. 212–13).

them as captives to the kingdom of Persia, and clear them out of our desert.' The Turks and pagans waited as long as it took for the army of Our Lord to start saying Mass. It was on a Sunday that they stormed the army. Had you been there, you would have heard a thousand trumpets give the signal to attack. The abominable forces carved their way through our people: Christians and pagans alike shrieked out their warcries. The Saracens, with more soldiers, had the upper hand and were itching to kill our Christians. The priest was already well into the reverent serenity of the Mass. He heard the Turks – enemies of God – full well and saw over his shoulder that his congregation had gone: the only ones left at the altar were him and the God he was consecrating. He took the chalice in his hands and picked up the host, then offered it to Jesus, Son of the Virgin. 'Lord God,' he said, 'my Lord who has everything in His keeping, true and glorious and heavenly, blessed Trinity, complete Your holy consecration for me today. I cannot complete it myself, for my death is at hand.' Picture what followed: up came Soliman of Nubia at full tilt and sliced the priest's head off with his shining sword.⁶³

25

The priest was killed as he sang Mass. Now hear of a miracle that Jesus Christ performed: the service could be properly concluded even though the priest's body was lying on the ground where he had been cut down.⁶⁴ Saladin [the son of Soliman] saw this and was furious.⁶⁵ He shouted to Soliman [of Nubia]: 'You stupid idiot! Sir, by Mohammed my god that was a stupid thing to do. You do realise that was a priest, a servant of God in full clerical garb. Once his death becomes common knowledge in France, the people and the brave soldiers will be furious. They will come and strip you of your lands, your strongholds and your cities. As far as I can see, God is furious at what you have done.' When Soliman heard this he roared with laughter, but no good was to come of that day for him.

⁶³ The priest's martyrdom (but not the miracle that followed) is briefly recounted in *GF*, p. 4; cf. *RM*, p. 87. His death during Mass underlines the theme of the Saracens as literally and diabolically the opposite of Christians. This and the following two *laissez* are *laissez similaires*, showing the importance the author attached to this episode.

⁶⁴ Miracles occur repeatedly in the *Antioche*. They are found in contemporary sources for the Crusade: the best known were the intervention of celestial forces at the battle of Antioch (*GF*, p. 69; Peter Tudebode [PT], trans. J. H. and L. L. Hill, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* (Philadelphia, 1974), pp. 87–8; Baudri of Bourgueil [BB], *Historia Jerosolymitana*, *RHC Occ* 4, pp. 1–111 at 77; *RM*, pp. 142–3) and the discovery of the Lance. They are seen as direct proof of divine support for the Crusade: cf. the story of Raimbaut Creton in *laisse* 169. See B. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind* (Aldershot, 1982).

⁶⁵ The use of Saladin as a name suggests a date not before the late twelfth century.

26

There was immense slaughter on the hills of Civetot. The priest saying Mass was killed at sword point when Soliman of Nicaea [sic] cut off his head: our Father and Redeemer Jesus was deeply unhappy at this. When our leaders found out what had happened, they were appalled and put every last ounce of effort into attacking the Turks. Every single one went forward bellowing at the top of his voice, shouting 'Montjoie!' in loud ringing tones. 'Come to the aid of the Holy Sepulchre, comrades! Forward!' They smashed their way through the pagans, killing many as they went and covering the ground with blood and brains.⁶⁶ However, the forces of the infidel were simply too many. They wounded our Frenchmen with Turkish horn bows. The battle lasted until sunset.

27

There was a great massacre on the hills of Civetot. The battle lasted until the sun went down. Soliman sounded a brass horn and the Persians and Slavs retreated. Corbaran of Olfierne addressed them: 'Gentlemen and noble Saracens, we ought to love Mohammed for helping us find those in the service of Jesus! Tomorrow every last one will be captured and hauled off to prison, and I shall hand over ten or fifteen of them to each of you.'⁶⁷ The French meanwhile huddled together in the lee of the hill and Lord Richard of Caumont addressed them in ringing tones: 'My lords and companions, there is no point refusing to face up to the truth. We have found far too large a crop of pagans here and I am convinced we stand no chance of escape. So as we are going to die, let us ensure we sell our deaths at a high price!' The bishop of Forez preached a sermon:⁶⁸ 'My lords and noble knights, let us all be united. Anyone who dies here for God will find true pardon for his soul, and God will grant him solace in Heaven. Let everyone lie on the ground and pray.' All complied: they knelt down and called on God with great devotion. The bishop of Forez pronounced a blessing on them; when they rose they were braver than lions and did not care one bit about death.⁶⁹ The noble lords spent that night in the valley. At the first streaks of dawn the following day, the pagans attacked them ferociously; they showered them with Turkish arrows and made a

⁶⁶ Vivid but formulaic: cf. *Guillaume*, v. 850, where a stream on the battlefield 'de sanc et de cervelle fud tut envolupé' ('was all stirred up with blood and brains', Bennett's translation).

⁶⁷ See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 135–55 on captivity and Saracens.

⁶⁸ The historical bishop of Forez was not on the Crusade. His fictional counterpart became one of the core band of the *chétifs*, assuming the role equivalent to Adhemar. See G. Myers for a tentative connection with the bishopric of Lyon: '*Les 'Chétifs': étude sur le développement de la chanson*', *R*, 105 (1984), pp. 79–83, 85–6.

⁶⁹ Literally 'did not give a button for'.

tremendous din. In return the French defended themselves nobly. Anyone they landed a blow on wasted his time asking for quarter: they sliced off heads below the chin and splattered the sand with blood and brains.

28

The battle covered a large area and lasted until noon, leaving the battlefield soaked with the blood of the dead and injured. Soliman took a horn and sounded the retreat, assembling the pagans on top of the hill of Civetot. Corbaran of Oliferne called out to Soliman: 'Look at all these bedraggled losers! None is going to escape our clutches. Not one has eaten for at least the last two days – so let's eat in full view of them with Amedelis keeping a lookout.⁷⁰ When they see us eating, their people will really feel their hunger.' 'It shall be as you command,' said Soliman. So Corbaran, Soliman of Nicaea and his entourage dined on the summit of Civetot while Amedelis kept watch with 30,000 Turks.⁷¹ The Franks saw every last mouthful. They were all desperate to join in, and many passed out from sheer misery and starvation. The bishop of Forez wept at the pity of it.⁷² When the Turks had eaten they all got back on their horses, and Corbaran came thundering down from the hill of Civetot along with 60,000 Turks. He expected to overwhelm our men in the first shock of attack. However, they grouped themselves to withstand him and he found things much harder than he had expected. Lord Richard of Caumont advanced a little out of the line and charged at Corbaran. He landed a heavy blow on him, slicing his helmet apart and damaging the mailed hood so that he inflicted a severe wound on the left side of his head. Indeed, he would have slashed right through if the sword had not twisted out of his grip.⁷³ Corbaran faltered and nearly fell from his horse, and Lord Richard of Caumont returned to the Christian line. All our barons stood shoulder to shoulder in the lee of the hill;

⁷⁰ Amedelis appears in some of the earliest accounts of the Crusade, as Kerbogha's lieutenant (RA, p. 62; Fulcher of Chartres [FC], *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*, trans. H. S. Fink and Sister F. R. Ryan (Knoxville, 1969), pp. 104–5). He becomes a major character later in the poem: his appearance here is a linking device.

⁷¹ Not in any other source: an imaginative tactic. Famine is a frequent theme in accounts of the Crusade and may have inspired this episode: cf. *GF*, pp. 33, 62; *PT*, pp. 79–81 (all at Antioch).

⁷² Standard reaction in the *chanson de geste*: compare, e.g., *Guillaume*, vv. 1007–10, where William weeps at the death of Vivien. In *RM* Adhemar weeps with joy at winning the battle of Antioch (p. 173).

⁷³ A precursor to Corbaran's later injury by Robert of Normandy and equally miraculous recovery in the battle of Antioch: *laissez* 344–5. For Saracen medicine, see P. E. Pormann and E. Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic Medicine* (Edinburgh, 2007); S. B. Edgington, 'Oriental and occidental medicine in the crusader states', in C. Kostick (ed.), *The Crusades and the Near East: Cultural Histories* (London, 2011), pp. 189–215.

they defended their position stoutly, but to no avail. Meanwhile Soliman retrieved the wounded Corbaran and summoned a doctor to him on top of the hill of Civetot. The doctor applied some ointment and in a trice Corbaran was back on his feet.⁷⁴ He hastily armed himself, and once equipped the king proclaimed at the top of his voice: 'By Mohammed my god, anyone who now proves a coward will be stripped of all he owns and will lose my favour!' When the Saracens heard this, they found a second wind. So many horns blew that the whole valley shook with the sound, and our people could hardly be blamed for losing heart. The bishop of Forez strengthened the resolve of all: 'My lords, you must do your utmost! All who die here will receive crowns of glory from God.' When our lords heard this their morale was restored. The slaughter began on all sides, leaving the whole valley strewn with dead and injured. The ferocity of battle continued unabated until the evening, and the Christian forces took a heavy pounding. Out of 40,000 less than half remained alive, and those caught by the Turks had their heads cut off. Night approached and day faded. Our people were dying of hunger. My God, what a truly desperate situation!

29

Night returned and day faded. The long wide valley below Civetot had 30,000 of our men lying decapitated in it; not one of them still had his head. Baldwin [of Beauvais] gathered the others together in the lee of the mountain and the bishop of Forez addressed them: 'My lords, for the love of God listen to the few words I have to say. If you can bring yourselves to do so, surrender tomorrow. If you do not you will all be cut to ribbons. If God chooses to help you, each of you may find himself captured and taken off somewhere where there is still a possibility of escape. Peter [the Hermit] should save himself: he knows these regions well, and if he can make it back to France he can report what has happened to the kings, princes and castellans there.'⁷⁵ The barons replied: 'We shall do as you recommend'.⁷⁶ Just after midnight Peter left, commending them all to the God of glory; he made his way down the slopes of Civetot and slipped right through the

⁷⁴ Unhistorical and about as realistic as a comic strip. This does reflect, however, the legendary quality of Saracen medicine. Compare *Les Narbonnais: chanson de geste*, ed. H. Suchier (2 vols, Paris, 1898), vol. 1, vv. 4304–34, where the Saracen doctor Forré is able to bring the dead back to life: the Franks prize his skills so highly that they kidnap him, and he eventually converts to Christianity.

⁷⁵ This avoids any accusation that Peter ran away.

⁷⁶ Surrender to the enemy grates slightly in a *chanson de geste*, let alone a divinely inspired crusade. However, the author needed it here as a plot device to set the scene for the *Chétifs* later. So it is justified by several days of heroic resistance, overwhelming numbers and the suggestion of surrender coming from the bishop of Forez rather than a secular leader.

pagan armies. His face and nose allowed him to pass for a convincing Saracen, since he had blackened and disfigured them with [the juice of] a plant. The hermit got clean away without being challenged because he spoke the Saracen language fluently.⁷⁷ I shall say no more of him and his successful escape. Instead I shall talk about our people and their captivity, describing how each was led off to pagandom.⁷⁸ As you will hear me tell, they underwent enormous suffering, hunger, thirst and imprisonment. No man made by God and born of woman could hear the tale of what they went through and not be moved to pity! Night was over and day dawned. The Saracens and pagans sounded their horns. Corbaran of Oliferne swarmed down from the mountain with a good 100,000 Turks on armoured horses. Soliman led and guided them all. Picture them as they come to a halt in the valley of Civetot!

30

The pagans assembled in the valley of Civetot. Corbaran commanded the whole host not to move until he had talked to the French. He then spurred his horse and urged it forward, taking King Soliman of Nicaea along with him. Baldwin and Richard came out to meet him and so did the famously proud Harpin of Bourges. When Corbaran saw them he called to Amedelis: 'Go and ask these losers their intentions. Let them come and parley with me under safe conduct.' Amedelis turned round and called to Richard: 'Frenchmen, can I be sure you will offer me safe passage?'

'You can,' said Harpin; 'have no fear on that score.'

'My lords,' said Amedelis, 'I shall not beat about the bush. Corbaran of Oliferne has sent me to tell you that if you are willing to surrender and obey him, you will be taken to the kingdom of Persia with him. If you decide to believe in Mohammed you will fare well: each of you will receive a kingdom and high royal status. If on the other hand you decide not to, you will be torn limb from limb.'⁷⁹ Richard of Caumont said: 'Never! Every last one of us would much rather have his head cut from his shoulders than renounce holy Christendom. However, we shall surrender ourselves entirely to his will provided that we are not to be killed or mutilated.' Amedelis turned and rode back to Corbaran to tell him their response. When he heard it, Corbaran roared with laughter and said to Soliman, 'The battle is over.

⁷⁷ A reminder that this is fiction. Peter was not at Civetot, and the historical sources provide him with an interpreter later when he is sent to negotiate with Kerbogha outside Antioch (*GF*, p. 67; *AA*, pp. 316–17).

⁷⁸ Narratorial intervention; see Introduction, chapter 3.

⁷⁹ Apostasy is a frequent offer in the *chanson de geste*, which all good knights should refuse: Rainalt Porcet receives a similar offer later in the poem. Conversion to Christianity is the mirror image and a common theme. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 494–543 for discussion and examples.

These Franks are in disarray and desperate with hunger.' Corbaran of Oliferne proclaimed his orders loudly. 'As of now no Frank is to be attacked.' So our men were stripped of their arms and given plenty to eat and drink. Then they were chained together in pairs with their hands tightly lashed behind their backs.⁸⁰ They called on God in His holy majesty: 'Lord God our Father, have mercy on us!'⁸¹

31

Our men were defeated on the hills of Civetot. More than 30,000 lost their lives; Corbaran enslaved the remainder and sent them far and wide throughout pagandom. He sent 140 to the emir of Persia and 300 to the household of King Abraham; and he remembered King Corbadas, sending him 100 captives all howling and lamenting their fate.⁸² All these were sent away from Syria; Corbaran kept back a batch of 300. They included the stern-faced Richard of Caumont; Baldwin of Beauvais (Jesus' blessing on him!); Harpin of Bourges along with them; Lord John of Alis, untainted by cowardice; Fulk of Melun and Richard of Pavia;⁸³ the noble bishop of Forez, the abbot of Fécamp and the other clergy.⁸⁴ My God! Just imagine what a wretched band they made!

32

Our people were all parcelled out on the hills of Civetot. As they saw their brothers, uncles or friends led away without them many were broken-hearted. There were 15,000 loud cries of 'Alas! Lord Corbaran, have pity on us! Let us be taken instead and let them stay here. In the name of your own god, let there be exchanges.'⁸⁵

⁸⁰ As so often in the *Antioche*, the Crusade is vividly described in terms of the realities of late twelfth-century warfare: surrender to an enemy against possible payment of ransom. See J. France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades* (London, 1999), p. 138.

⁸¹ This episode prefigures what will happen before the battle of Antioch: there are negotiations between the two sides, Amedelis plays a role as Corbaran's go-between and Corbaran laughs at the Franks. The parallel episodes bookend the narrative, with the defeat at Civetot avenged by victory at Antioch at the end of the poem.

⁸² The Sultan of Persia plays a key role later in the poem, and Corbadas later in the cycle as the king of Jerusalem.

⁸³ This is Richard of Pavia's only appearance in history or literature. His provenance is unlikely. See Myers, '*Les Chétifs*: Etude', pp. 83–4, for possible links to the abbey of Fécamp.

⁸⁴ The absence of the abbot of Fécamp on crusade would surely have been noted elsewhere.

⁸⁵ The arithmetic is slightly questionable. There were fewer than 20,000 left out of 40,000 in *laisse* 28, and more than 30,000 killed in *laisse* 31.

Corbaran listened and granted their wish. Each was able to choose his companions as they were led away. Alas, my God! What suffering they went on to endure, with more than a year in captivity.

33

Our people were all separated on the hills of Civetot and scattered far and wide through pagandom. Alas, my God! How much they suffered physically! Corbaran took his leave and led his forces away over hills, mountains and valleys, cramming a full ride into each day until one morning he arrived back in Oliferne. His elderly mother Calabra came out to meet him; she was an expert in pagan lore.⁸⁶ She came up to the king beaming with joy and arms open wide. 'Let me tell you what I think, my wonderful son,' said the old woman. 'I am certain that the people you are bringing me will serve you well before the end; but I do not know when that will be or in what circumstances.'⁸⁷ Corbaran heard his mother and his face lit up. He leapt nimbly from his saddled mule. He had all the captives consigned to his stone prison other than the renowned Richard of Caumont and Harpin of Bourges, that excellent swordsman.

34

Corbaran got off his Arab mule and gave orders that the captives should be consigned to his prison. His orders were carried out at once, and they were all taken off except Richard of Caumont, Lord John of Alis, and the brave and valiant Harpin of Bourges; Baldwin of Beauvais and the noble knight Fulk of Melun were also picked out. Corbaran kept these in his vaulted palace. Each one was fettered with chains and shackles; every day they carried stones to the grey-cemented walls and dragged carts like beasts of burden all day long. This lasted a whole year and

⁸⁶ Kerbogha's mother has a long pedigree. The *GF* sets out a long conversation between her and Kerbogha where she predicts his defeat at the battle of Antioch and tries to dissuade him from fighting (pp. 53–6): interestingly this is preserved with little alteration in the sources based on the *GF* (e.g. RM, pp. 154–7; [GN] *The Deeds of God through the Franks: A translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos*, trans. R. Levine (Woodbridge, 1996), pp. 96–8; PT, pp. 69–72). See N. Hodgson, 'The role of Kerbogha's mother in the *Gesta Francorum* and other selected chronicles of the First Crusade', in S. Edgington and S. Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 163–76. The author of the *Antioche* names Calabra and brings her in at the start of the cycle to set the scene for what is to follow.

⁸⁷ This gives a foretaste of Calabra's role before the battle of Antioch, where she prophesies Corbaran's defeat and tries to persuade him not to give battle. Her words also look forward to the action of the *Chétifs*, where the Christian captives help Corbaran out of three difficult situations.

fifteen days until, by the will of Jesus the King of Heaven, Richard of Caumont killed the two Turks. This led to their release – that is what the written source says.⁸⁸ Let us leave them for the moment (may God aid them!) and turn to Peter [the Hermit], who had fled back. He covered the hills, mountains and lands in record time and reached the Arm of St George, which he crossed by ship.⁸⁹

35

Peter fled all alone, with no companions, and spurred on at top speed until he reached Rome. He told the pope of their crushing defeat. His men were deeply disturbed: 'We are utterly lost! We have been confronted by wicked Persians and Saracens who have slaughtered our men, flung them into prisons and carted them off into captivity in the depths of Syria. My lord pope, for the love of God have mercy on us!' The pope replied: 'We are not going to take this lying down. With the good grace of God and St Peter we are going to rescue the captives.'⁹⁰ As soon as dawn breaks tomorrow we shall send out to the bishops and nobles and command them in the name of God to summon French, Flemings and Burgundians to come and avenge God on the cowardly Slavs who have insulted Him and His sacred Name.'⁹¹ He wrote the letters, sealed them with a lead seal, and sent them out by messenger to every region far and wide. Now the messengers (God's mercy on them!) set out and did not hesitate or draw rein all the way to Clermont. It was there that the great sermon was preached to the army of God.⁹² The noble lords of France were there, and dukes and counts from Swabia and Frisia; so was count Hugh, Raymond of Saint-Gilles, Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred and Bohemond, and (last but not least) the bishop of Le Puy.⁹³ It was explained to them what

⁸⁸ This refers to the first part of the *Chétifs* in which Richard kills two Turkish champions in a judicial duel. The reference to the written source suggests that 'Graindor' had a manuscript of this episode of the *Chétifs* in front of him.

⁸⁹ According to AA Peter was in Constantinople negotiating supplies when the defeat at Civetot took place (pp. 36–7). The chronology is disrupted: Civetot was after rather than before Clermont.

⁹⁰ The captivity of the 'chétifs' becomes a driver of the narrative: the Crusade is a mission to free them.

⁹¹ Arabs and Persians are of course not Slavs. But the *chanson de geste* categorised them all as non-Christians and therefore the enemy. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, p. 2.

⁹² In the *GF* and its dependants Urban's speech is the starting point of the Crusade and reported in detail: RM (who claims to have heard it in person), pp. 79–82; GN, pp. 42–5; BB, pp. 12–15; independent accounts in FC, pp. 65–7, and William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R. Mynors, completed by R.M. Thomas and M. Winterbottom (2 vols, Oxford, 1998–99), vol. 1, pp. 598–607. In the *Antioche* and in AA it receives less emphasis as the Crusade is already under way.

⁹³ Hugh of Vermandois, brother of Philip I of France; Raymond IV, count of Toulouse; Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Lorraine; Tancred; Bohemond, son of Robert Guiscard; Adhe-

had happened and what should happen now. All willingly accepted; they left their homes to serve God with great devotion.⁹⁴

36

The assembly at Clermont in the Auvergne was a great one, and it was there that the army of Jesus was established by oath. The news made its way to women and girls throughout France and all the surrounding regions.⁹⁵ All of them declared themselves devastated and got together for a moan: 'Look how upset I am! It was a bad day when the nobles assembled. Tomorrow there will not be a single room left with hangings; there will be no stories and no fantastic tales; even the richest of us will find herself at a loose end.' Every last one said 'I am *soooo* unhappy! I wish I'd never been born!'

37

The women and girls were beside themselves with grief, saying to each other 'Alas! Better if we'd never been born!' Those who were married petitioned their lords, saying: 'We are your wives in the eyes of God. My lords, when you have completed your conquests and see the city where God suffered under a rain of blows, remember us – do not forget us.' Alas, my God! What a lot of tears were shed! Many of the women took the cross; so did noble girls, beloved of God, going with the fathers who had given them life. The barons and princes assembled the armies. They strapped supplies firmly onto mules and jennies; they were extremely well equipped with weapons. The companies got under way. Just imagine them on the march. The good duke of Bouillon was in command, and led the troops capably up hill and down dale, not drawing rein until they reached Constantinople.⁹⁶ There they awaited the Byzantines and reinforcements of various

mar, bishop of Le Puy and Urban's legate on the Crusade, closely associated with Raymond IV. Along with Robert of Normandy and Robert of Flanders, who are surprisingly not mentioned here, they formed the leaders of the Crusade. However with the exception of Adhemar and possibly Raymond none of them was at Clermont.

⁹⁴ See Appendix for translation of the additional material B.N. fr. 786 inserts here on the council of Clermont.

⁹⁵ The crusaders' women are as stereotyped as the men, providing faintly burlesque light relief here and pathos elsewhere. See Introduction, chapter 3. The *laisses enchainées* emphasise their reaction.

⁹⁶ Godfrey became the first ruler of the new crusader state of Jerusalem (1099–1100), and this later prominence is projected back to the early stages of the Crusade. The *Antioche* leaps lightly over the vicissitudes of the journey reported in AA book 2, the *GF* and dependent texts.

nationalities. These arrived one Thursday evening at Vespers in the form of 60,000 Byzantine swordsmen.

38

There were enormous numbers of nobles from France, Burgundy and other foreign countries in Constantinople. That night Taticius No-Nose made it his business to give them supplies (he was nephew to the emperor and one of this close advisors).⁹⁷ So many nobles had come together that it was quite impossible to lodge them all within the walls, so they erected pavilions and tents outside. Taticius provided them with meat, wine and corn, hay, oats and fine white bread.⁹⁸ He then sought out his uncle for a word. 'My lord and revered uncle,' he said, 'I beg you, in the name of God who hung upon the cross, to give me leave to go and avenge Him for His suffering.'

'I am delighted to grant my fine nephew's wish,' [replied the emperor]. The powerful emperor summoned his men in person, numbering some 20,000, and addressed them in these terms: 'My noble lords,' he said, 'listen to me. You see that powerful army outside our walls? I shall destroy it entirely with your support!'⁹⁹ Taticius No-Nose was horrified when he heard this, and furious at the

⁹⁷ Taticius plays a major role in contemporary accounts of the Crusade. He was assigned by the emperor to manage the Christian passage through Byzantine territory; other sources agree that he had a damaged nose: e.g. RA, who says, 'He had a disfigured nose and lacked any redeeming qualities' (p. 54). In AA he is 'a man with a cut-off nose' (pp. 94–5), and GN goes so far as to describe his gold prosthesis (p. 81). The contemporary chroniclers (except AA) are united in virulent criticism of his role as ineffectual at best and treacherous at worst. The *Antioche* is alone in suggesting he was the emperor's nephew: see Introduction, chapter 3.

⁹⁸ In contrast to rough everyday rye and spelt.

⁹⁹ In contrast to the treatment of Taticius, the *Antioche* portrays Alexius, emperor of Constantinople, in the same light as other chroniclers: an underhand traitor who used the Crusade for his own ends and betrayed the crusaders by refusing to come to their aid at Antioch: see for example *GF*, pp. 63–4. The reality was more complex. It is likely that Alexius had summoned some form of help from the West, taking his cue from that supplied by Robert the Frisian in 1091; it is equally likely that he had never expected such a huge and ideologically driven army to arrive in response, disrupting the delicate balance of power in the Middle East. Unsurprisingly the clash of outlook led to the crusaders forming a deep dislike for their fellow (Byzantine) Christians. For further discussion see R. J. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States 1096–1204* (Oxford, 1993), p. 60: 'the chroniclers ... tried to cover over the dubious rejection by the Crusaders of the Byzantine claims resulting from the feudal agreement by a systematic defamation of the Greek empire.' If we accept a dating around the Fourth Crusade, the portrayal may also be coloured by French experience of the Byzantine court: see J. Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London, 2005), p. 95, for open hostility on the Third Crusade.

words of his uncle. He called his men together: 'My lords, if you are with me slip out of the ranks and come to one side.' 50,000 split off from the main army. They replied, 'My lord, here we are at your command.' Taticius No-Nose bellowed to the emperor at the top of his voice: 'Now tell me what you think of the noble lords of France you mean to destroy! I have brought these men over here and drawn them up against you. Any attempt to hurt them would be shameful – after all, you have supplied them with food from your own stocks even if you have yet to equip them or rely on them in battle.'¹⁰⁰ Harm done to them is harm done to me. So be very careful, Emperor, not to give any orders you might regret later or which would leave me to carry the can. No matter what your wealth, this would be intolerable, and you would deserve to lose it all.' The emperor replied: 'My lord, just try it!' Taticius yelled 'Bring me my sword!' His blade was promptly put into his hand, and he tore it from its scabbard like a madman. Battle was joined throughout the palace, unleashing death, slaughter and mutilation. At that point Guy the seneschal leapt up the palace steps and said to the emperor: 'What on earth do you think you're doing? What are you playing at, fighting inside the palace?'¹⁰¹ Taticius replied, 'I'll tell you exactly what. The emperor sent for the noble barons, asking them to come to him under clear pledge of safety. So now here they are, lodged in his city – and all he wants to do is murder them, the double-crossing rat!' [Guy] the seneschal commented, 'You just try anything of the sort and you will regret it bitterly, and you will never live down the stain on your honour either.' He immediately reassured the barons about the whole situation, and the emperor too had a change of heart and gave them assurances that he promptly proceeded to betray. Just listen to how the coward strung them along! He summoned his privy councillor Guielin.¹⁰² 'Tonight, go round the whole city for me under cover of darkness. Tell the townsfolk not to show so much as a crust of bread, or sell any oats or corn. If they sell even as little as two deniers' worth, no mercy will be shown and they will be torn limb from limb.' Now let us hope God in His infinite goodness will think of His people – because if Jesus does not, they will all starve. At daybreak the next morning the multitude got up and sought food, but found none; and when they discovered none for sale, they were terrified. Lord! How

¹⁰⁰ Those who had received hospitality could not be attacked. For a famous example see Beha ed-Din ibn Shedad, *Life of Saladin*, trans. C. R. Conder, PPTS 13 (London, 1897), pp. 114–15. Saladin was careful to point out that he had not offered Renaud de Châtillon refreshment, meaning that he could legitimately be killed.

¹⁰¹ Guy, Bohemond's half-brother. His appearance here looks forward to his long speech later lamenting the emperor's failure to come to the aid of the Christians at Antioch, a further linking device for the text.

¹⁰² Probably fictional, but Anna Comnena has another westerner 'Geliemos o Klareles' alongside Guy: trans. E. R. A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 417. In AA he is William Claret (pp. 758–9).

ceaselessly they complained, poor wretches! Taticius No-Nose took pity on them, and saved the day for them all.¹⁰³

39

There was mass outcry all round Constantinople. Taticius No-Nose heard the uproar. He sought out his uncle and said to him in reasoned tones: 'Telling your leaders not to let anything be distributed to the French was one of the worst decisions of your life. God has never before put on earth knights like this – and they're coming your way with swords drawn. They are the flower of French chivalry. Uncle, you should just see them in their lodgings preparing their attack! They swear by God, the Son of the Blessed Virgin, that unless food appears your city will be smashed to pieces. You will not make it through to the evening: everything will be destroyed. They much prefer a joyful death to a miserable existence. And I have to say that if they do attack and defeat you, you will receive summary justice.' The emperor replied: 'I totally disagree.' At this Taticius nearly expired [with rage]: his face darkened at such appalling treatment, and he yelled at the top of his voice: 'By my faith, Emperor, I'm not going to hold back! Treachery disgusts me and so do traitors! It was you who summoned the French here in force to help you.'¹⁰⁴ You invited them to make their way to your powerful city and you said you would ferry them across the Arm of St George. They duly came. And what do you do – refuse them the basic necessities of existence! They are all furious – the duke of Normandy, Bohemond, the stern-featured Tancred, the duke of Bouillon who has never had any time for petty jealousy, and Robert the Frisian of noble lineage.¹⁰⁵ They swear by Almighty God, the Lord of all, that they will torch all your wealth with Greek fire;¹⁰⁶ you will lose your city and your palace of porphyry;¹⁰⁷ you may lose your

¹⁰³ This seems to be a fictionalised version of the dispute between Alexius and Godfrey: AA, pp. 76–83; AC, pp. 318–23.

¹⁰⁴ An oblique reference to the apocryphal letter written by Alexius to Robert the Frisian; this was well known, surviving in some thirty manuscripts along with the chronicle of Robert the Monk, the most popular account of the Crusade. See Sweetenham in RM, pp. 215–23.

¹⁰⁵ The *Antioche* persistently confuses Robert of Flanders (who was on Crusade) with his father Robert the Frisian (who was not). The *Canso* comments rather sharply that some authors do not seem to know the difference (vv. 11–12).

¹⁰⁶ Greek fire was a naphtha-based paste that stuck to and burned anything it touched; it could be extinguished only with vinegar. For its use at the siege of Acre in 1190, see H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades* (Oxford, 1972), p. 141; Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 982–8, for its use in *chansons de geste*. The Israel National Maritime Museum at Haifa has examples of clay pots used to throw Greek fire; about the size and shape of a hand grenade, they would burst on impact.

¹⁰⁷ Porphyry – a purple-coloured stone – could be used only by the emperor in Byzantium.

people as well. Just how stupid can you be!' With that Taticius stormed out of the vaulted room.

40

When Taticius realised that his efforts to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion were not going to work out, he left his uncle on bad terms. He made his way out of the town and sought out the Franks. He found them racked with hunger and in a bad way. Before he could get a word out Bohemond called out to him: 'How did you get on, my friend? What's going on?' 'I have to say, my lord, that my uncle has completely let me down. Wicked emperor that he is, he has gone back on his word – may the Lord who hung on the Cross confound him! I hope God turns against him so he cannot hold the city and everything turns against him. God bless him who strikes the first blow!' And it was Taticius who was the first to arm himself for battle, followed by those favoured by God. They blew horns on all sides, and the emperor himself heard them from up in his tower.

41

When the emperor heard unusually high levels of commotion, he summoned the false-believer Greeks:¹⁰⁸ 'Just listen to the racket the Franks are making out there.' The seneschal added: 'They make a magnificent sight. Look over to the fields [outside the town], Emperor, and see the glitter of their golden equipment.'¹⁰⁹ The emperor listened: his mood darkened and he was worried. He looked out. He saw coats of mail being put on and large numbers of valiant knights mounting their horses all over the field – a good 100,000 with green-sheened helmets. It will come as no surprise to you that he was utterly dismayed. He summoned one of his interpreters: 'Get out there straight away and tell the Normans and Duke Godfrey this from me: they can be completely confident of getting enough bread from today for the next twenty years!' When he heard this [Guy] the seneschal was over the moon.

42

When the seneschal heard quite how upset his lord was and that he was on the point of sending his interpreter out onto the battlefield, he said to the emperor: 'My

¹⁰⁸ A reference to the perceived heresy of the Orthodox Greeks. The OF word 'mescreans' (non-believers) is the standard term for Saracens too.

¹⁰⁹ Skilful propaganda by Guy, although it is slightly odd that the text refers to the seneschal without naming him.

noble lord, don't do it this way. Better to find a messenger and send him to them to invite the leaders of the army and Tancred of Apulia to come and parley with you: you will declare a truce provided they obey your orders and do as you wish.'

'Go and tell them so,' said the emperor.

'Your wish is my command,' said the seneschal, and so saying leapt down the steps. He was confronted by more than 10,000 armed Frenchmen, with the renowned Godfrey riding out in front. The seneschal addressed him: 'My lord duke, over here.' 'Say what you have come to say,' replied the lords.

'The emperor summons you to his presence along with Duke Bohemond and the other leaders.'

'My friend,' replied Godefroy, 'listen to my response. How can we be sure you will do us no harm? The emperor has shown himself not to be trusted and a thoroughgoing villain.' The seneschal replied: 'You need have no fears on that score. I shall be held hostage as a guarantee until your safe return.'

43

The noble and brave Bohemond of Sicily, Tancred of Apulia, and those prominent in the army whose advice was well considered went off to one side. 'My lords, let us go into the city,' said Wicher the Swabian.¹¹⁰ 'But the emperor is a thoroughgoing villain and a slippery coward. Unless God the Redeemer and King of Heaven takes things in hand, we shall be put to death and cannot be sure of our safety.' Enguerrand of St-Pol was the first to respond.¹¹¹ 'We have put on our mail hauberks, and we can carry our glittering swords under our cloaks in such a way that the powerful emperor has no inkling of it unless he tries to do us any harm – and if he does, 10,000 heretic Greeks will die for it.'

'May God, the King of Glory, never come to the aid of anyone who backs down now!' said Robert of Normandy.

44

There was a translator with the seneschal who was an intimate of the emperor and very dear to him. He called over to the leaders and addressed them thus: 'You

¹¹⁰ Duparc-Quioc is probably correct to identify Hungier with 'Guigier l'Alemans', in which case he is AA's Wicher the Swabian, a *ministerialis* of Fulda (*Edition*, p. 558; AA, pp. 486–7).

¹¹¹ This is the first appearance of Enguerrand of St-Pol, son of Hugh IV Campdavène. He and his father recur repeatedly as the heroes of the *Antioche*, and he is portrayed here on equal terms with the leaders of the Crusade. This does not correspond to the reality as portrayed by contemporary chroniclers (the St-Pols occur only four times in AA, for example). See Introduction, chapter 1.

really have nothing to worry about, my noble lords. Look, here is the seneschal. I am being quite straight with you: the emperor has sent him as a hostage against your safe return. Go and negotiate with him in his splendid palace. You really do have nothing to lose.' The leaders said: 'It is in our interests to agree.'

45

On the advice of Guy the French disarmed. By God! They were splendidly equipped. Our leaders made their way through the prosperous town, taking Geldin the interpreter with them.¹¹² Once they came to the marble steps [leading up to the palace], Geldin hastened before them all the way up the steps to the emperor and greeted him: 'May God who created us all save you, Lord Emperor. Look, noble sir – here in your very own city you can see the nobility of France, innumerable strong knights all on their way to your court.' The emperor gave fervent thanks to God when he heard this. He had silk surcoats and drapes, green silk and red samite patterned with medallions brought in.¹¹³ This was so he could honour the Franks with the greatest possible magnificence. Then the counts went on into the inner apartments. Inside his painted palace the emperor was sitting on a throne made of gold with enamelled studs.¹¹⁴ When he saw the noble barons in his keep he gave a deep sigh of pure joy.

46

The brave and shrewd Godfrey was the first to speak. 'May the God of glory who has power over all things come to the aid of the emperor and his mighty nobles through the help of the knights from the land of the Franks!'

'God's protection be on you!' replied the emperor. The duke of Bouillon said: 'Before everyone here I make this assertion – never before has such an outstanding body of leaders been seen in these halls. My lord, we have presented ourselves at your command. Now we want to know your intentions. If you are thinking of doing us harm, let me assure you that we shall die at sword-point to get our hands on the provisions which abound in the city and which our forces desperately need.'

¹¹² Geldin the interpreter may be an echo, like Guielin above, of William Claret, who as a Norman at the Byzantine court would be a suitable interpreter.

¹¹³ Samite was a silk cloth manufactured in Persia and the Middle East and imported to Europe. The Musée du Trésor de la Cathédrale-St.Paul in Liège has two examples in the form of the two shrouds used for the relics of St Lambert: these are of red samite with patterns of gold medallions showing beasts and flowers. See G. S. Colin, 'Latin SIGILLATUS, Roman SIGLATON et ESCARLAT', *R*, 56 (1930), pp. 178–90, 418.

¹¹⁴ Literally a folding stool: part of the Carolingian tradition. The Louvre has a fine example.

If, however, you mean well by us, you can rely on us as your men. With your help we can overcome the infidel Soliman and the sultan of Persia and King Corbaran.’ The emperor replied to this: ‘I could ask for nothing better. I shall not fail you as long as I live.’

47

The emperor said: ‘Marvellous stories are told about the French forces who have come here. I am very anxious about my nephew Taticius. When he confronts the Saracens, those wicked cowards, they will make a hideous racket like chained-up dogs;¹¹⁵ I am quite sure he will not be able to cope and I wonder whether you will either.’

‘Your point is well made,’ said Godfrey. ‘We are hardly going to put up much resistance to blows from well-sharpened swords if we can’t even cope with the noise the Slavs make.’ This put fresh heart into the emperor. He called over his interpreter and said: ‘Come here, brother. Who is that fine strong knight taking the lead in discussion?’ The interpreter said: ‘For future reference, that is the duke of Bouillon. He is very famous, and will conquer lands, regions and cities.’ This gave the emperor pause for thought. His next action was to call all the leaders up to him one by one. They did homage to him entirely of their own free will, and he promised to look after their interests.¹¹⁶ Much better however if they had killed him then and there and taken Constantinople and its heaps of well-guarded treasures!¹¹⁷ Bohemond and Tancred turned and left: neither had any desire to be adviser and intimate of the emperor. This angered the emperor considerably: ‘Tell me who those two are, Taticius No-Nose,’ [he said].¹¹⁸ Taticius replied: ‘Those

¹¹⁵ A standard comparison for enemies: cf. *Canso*, v. 321, for the guardians of Corbaran’s tent barking like dogs; Peire Vidal says German sounds like dogs barking: *Peire Vidal: Poesie*, ed. D’Arco Silvio Avalle (2 vols, Milan, 1960), vol. 2, pp. 166–80, at v. 12.

¹¹⁶ Again the *Antioche* passes in one sentence over a key episode and garbles it. At this point all the leaders except Tancred did take an oath to the emperor; Raymond IV swore a modified version. The exact terms of the oath made by the leaders to Alexios are not known: see J. H. Pryor, ‘The oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade to Emperor Alexius I Comnenus: fealty, homage, *pistis*, *douleia*’, *P*, 2 (1984), pp. 111–41. There is some suggestion that Bohemond, far from refusing to take an oath, swore a secret version allowing him preferential treatment. Bohemond was subsequently to suggest that his possession of Antioch was justified because the emperor reneged on his promise to send help at a crucial moment. For further discussion see A. C. Krey, ‘A neglected passage in the *Gesta* and its bearing on the literature of the first crusade’, in L. J. Paetow (ed.), *The Crusades and other Historical Essays presented to Dana C. Munro* (New York, 1928), pp. 57–78. A century afterwards, these disputes had little importance for the author of the text.

¹¹⁷ As was the case in the Fourth Crusade.

¹¹⁸ Somewhat reminiscent of Amedelis’ later commentary to Corbaran before the battle of Antioch.

are the flower of the Franks. The one is called Bohemond; he is the son of Robert Guiscard from Sicily, who defeated the emperor to his shame.¹¹⁹ The other is from Apulia and his name is Tancred. If they take against you, you are in deep trouble.' At this the emperor lowered his gaze. The lords returned to their lodgings and their tents. They stayed there for eight days, well supplied with bread, wine and oats. On the ninth day they moved off. They formally took their leave [of the emperor]. Taticius guided them to the Arm of St George, where they found ships ready and waiting for them. They embarked with their equipment. May God who hung on the Cross guide them!

48

The noble army marked with the Holy Cross got under way. They made their way through land after land including the Land of Death, and pressed on without stopping under the guidance of Taticius.¹²⁰ It was a relief to cross the Arm of St George; they found a second wind and did not stop until they reached the heavily fortified city of Nicaea. There they found Soliman. He was one of the unspeakable race who do not believe in God and follow his ways: instead he loved Mohammed and killed our people left, right and centre. Indeed any talk of God made him scratch and rub himself with rage. Our blessed pilgrims found themselves without bread, wine or coarse loaves.¹²¹ Now they need God, the comfort of the whole world, to come to their assistance!

49

The nobles from many lands were fired up with the love of Jesus. The French banner was out in front leading the way. The nobles of Burgundy and Germany; of Lombardy, Apulia and Romagna; of Flanders and Frisia and Lotharingia; of England and Scotland, not forgetting the Irish; the enormous host with the count of St-Gilles; the barons of Gascony and those of Poland¹²² – all of them had come to

¹¹⁹ This refers to the attack on the Byzantine empire's Dalmatian coast undertaken by Bohemond with his father Robert Guiscard in the 1080s. The Normans succeeded in capturing Durazzo.

¹²⁰ Terre Morte may be an allusion to the field of bones – the remains of Peter's army – that the crusaders found near Nicomedia: see *GF*, pp. 13–14. However the reference is unclear.

¹²¹ T-L suggests this is a heavy coarse loaf (vol. 10, pp. 456–7). In other sources it is a tart, e.g. T. Austin (ed.), *Two Fifteenth-century Cookery Books* (Oxford, 1888), p. 98 – a rather inventive-sounding fig and salmon tart. A tart would, however, be an unlikely luxury in a siege and we have followed T-L.

¹²² It is not obvious why Poland is referred to here other than for the rhyme.

avenge the disgrace God suffered on the Cross to save His kingdom. Only a very powerful God could have brought together such a host; not a single one hesitated to put his abilities at God's service. I do not think the tumult of battle would be long in coming with lots of lances smashing into shields.

50

Now our French nobles are riding forward together, turning their shields into scrips and their lances into staffs!¹²³ They rode non-stop, not taking so much as a house until they came in sight of the wall and keep of Nicaea, and the mosques where the villains worship.¹²⁴ The Christians attacked it vigorously, but on this occasion succeeded in taking neither towers nor keep. So they camped down all the way round [the town]. I can name the best of them. The first in the camp was Godfrey of Bouillon; after him Tancred, next to Bohemond; Taticius No-Nose, the lion-hearted; William the Carpenter, who took up a position in the front line; Roger the Emperor, spreading his banner; Clarembaut of Vendueil (those two were companions); Thomas of La Fère, Anselm of Ribemont, Count Warner of Grey, Baldwin of Mons, Lord Guy of Porsese, Baldwin Cauderon, and the outstanding Baldwin of Ghent; there were also Count Eustace, Baldwin of Bouillon, the duke of Normandy, and Robert the Frisian. And we shouldn't for God's sake forget Hugh of St-Pol or Enguerrand his son (may God forgive him!); Stephen of Albemarle, son of Duke Otto; Rainald of Beauvais and Walter of Caumont; Everard of Le Puiset and Drogo of Moncy; Walter of Domedart; Bernard, brother of Eudes; Count Rotrou of Perche and Andrew of Clermont; Lord Alan of Nantes and Conan the Breton; Stephen of Blois; Aimeric Garaton, and the bishop of Le Puy to preach them a sermon; Lord Hugh the Maisné, brother of King Philip; Roger of Rosoie who limped because of his heel; Herbert, duke of the Basques, Godeschalk and Simon; the count of Vendôme known as Hugh, and the count of Navarre whose name was Milo; the count of Forez called Walter; Oliver of Venice, who had blond hair; the count of Blansdras, whose name was Thierry; the count of Limoges pitched his tent there; and the duke of Brittany called Otto; Waleran of Bavaria and Cherfron the Swabian, his brother Wicher and lord Raimbaut Creton.¹²⁵ However, the good count Raymond was as yet nowhere to be seen; they kept a place for him

¹²³ A neat summary of the status of the crusader: armed pilgrim.

¹²⁴ Nicaea had been lost to the Turks following the battle of Manzikert, 1071. It had then changed hands among rival Turkish factions, but since 1092 had been ruled by Qilij Arslan as his capital. Its recovery was a priority for Alexius, not least because of its proximity to Constantinople..

¹²⁵ This long list of participants in the siege if Nicaea is found – but with even more names – in AA, pp. 94–101. See Introduction, chapter 1. A comparison of the two lists is to be found in Duparc-Quioc, *Edition*, pp. 71–3.

and staked it out. That night Soliman sneaked out like a thief, taking nothing but his weapons and his horse from Gascony.¹²⁶

51

That night Soliman slipped out of Nicaea; leaving the city guarded by other Saracens, he went in search of help. Before long he happened on 100,000 men bringing supplies of bread, wine and corn in carts large and small and lashed on pack animals. They were all spoiling to defend Nicaea and its elaborately decorated palaces, but much good that did them: waiting for them at the Rainmont Gate from which the king had set out they found Duke Robert and his powerful nobles, Raymond of St-Gilles, old and valiant; and 60,000 iron-clad men. At the sight of them Soliman flew into a rage. He summoned his two sons hotfoot from the other side of Civetot to meet him in the steep valley where the fords were.¹²⁷ 'Come here both of you gentlemen,' said Soliman. 'What am I going to do about the French? Well, what do you suggest? If they take my town and my strongest fortifications, not a single person will make it back to Antioch.' Saladin replied: 'I did tell you at the time that it was a bad idea to use the sword you carried on that priest when he was at the altar under God's protection. All Christendom has been swept by a wave of revulsion.' A bearded Saracen heard his words: he was an interpreter originally from Burgundy.¹²⁸ He got to his feet in front of all the pagans and said to Soliman: 'Listen to what I have to say. As you know, all holy Christendom is furious. All the nobility of France have risen against us. They are without a doubt going to conquer all your possessions and not leave you as much as four feet of land.'

'Too true,' said Saladin. Tornicans responded: 'Don't lose heart just yet. I shall take care of them at sunrise tomorrow; in the name of Mohammed I seek your help.' Soliman replied 'I shall be there.' But when he saw that the entrance to Nicaea was blocked, he was frantic, coward that he was. He summoned his interpreter and disguised him with the dress and equipment of a palmer. Then Soliman told him: 'Go to Nicaea on my behalf and reassure my people who are inside.' So the interpreter set off and made his way to Nicaea. He came right up to the walls disguised as a pilgrim and called softly to those inside: 'My lords, how are you getting on? Don't be frightened. May Apollon to whom you frequently

¹²⁶ Gascony is probably alluded to in order to fit the rhyme scheme rather than to suggest the horse was from there. Typically Soliman is shown in an inglorious light.

¹²⁷ According to AA the sons were no more than children; other sources do not mention them (pp. 124–27). The number of Soliman's sons varies in the text: their function is to act as motivation for Saracen revenge.

¹²⁸ It is not obvious why there should be an apostate interpreter. On interpreters in the text see I. de Riquer, 'Los interpretes de la Chanson d'Antioche', *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 43 (1991–92), pp. 313–19.

bow down and worship protect you.¹²⁹ Lord Soliman instructs you to stand firm and not to lose heart, because help is on the way. Tomorrow evening you will see a good 100,000 men all coming to your aid, armed with feathered darts. Do to these Christians what you did to Peter the Hermit's men, and you will be rewarded with the sight of every last one chained together two by two and badly wounded.' It was a beautiful limpid night, crystal clear.¹³⁰ Old Lord Raymond was on guard that evening along with Bohemond of Sicily and his companion Tancred.¹³¹ They heard everything said to the Slavs [inside the town].¹³² A bad day for the messenger indeed, because the only reward he got for his pains was to be killed! They took and bound him, dragged him off to their camp and interrogated him about the help which was on its way. He told them the story from beginning to end in front of the whole army. They tied him hand and foot, heaved him onto the siege engine and catapulted him so he landed in front of the keep of Nicaea amongst all the pagans.¹³³ The French did this as a punishment for his underhand treachery.

52

Once the news of what had happened had been cried through the whole town, every single Saracen implored Mohammed desperately: 'Mohammed, noble lord, help him! Even if his body is dead, let his soul live on. The gods the Franks believe in don't believe in any such thing as souls.' Day drew near and dawn brightened. The army roused itself from tents and lodgings. The duke of Normandy, along with Count Robert of Flanders and his large force, was the first to arm. Baldwin Caudeiron put on his hauberk; laced up his green-sheened helmet; buckled on his glittering sword; hung his strong circular shield round his neck; took a stout lance in his fist, tying a banner to it with a silver cord; and vaulted onto his horse without expecting it to stoop down for him to mount.¹³⁴ He rode up to the count of Flanders and bowed low. 'My lord, in the name of Almighty God who rules over all, when I was back in your rich city of Arras, I boasted in front of all – rather frivolously

¹²⁹ One of the standard Saracen deities in the *chanson de geste*. See M. Zink, 'Apollin', *La chanson de geste et le mythe carolingien: Mélanges René Louis* (St-Père-sous-Vézelay, 1982), pp. 503–9.

¹³⁰ 'la nuis fu bele et clere', a frequently occurring formula in the text.

¹³¹ Raymond was on guard during the battle of Antioch and did not participate in the glory; RA says he was ill (p. 61). Perhaps with this in mind the *Antioche* repeatedly shows him guarding a variety of Saracen towns.

¹³² This implies that at least one of them understood Arabic. Tancred and Bohemond, as southern Italians, are more likely.

¹³³ The *Antioche* seems to be conflating two stories about spies in AA: one episode at Nicaea (pp. 102–3) and the other outside Jerusalem (pp. 420–23).

¹³⁴ Baldwin of Calderun's death is recounted by AA (pp. 110–11), and by Anselm of Ribemont in his first letter: Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae*, p. 145.

– that it would be I who would strike the first blow at the pagans.’ The count was delighted to hear this. He announced loudly in front of all the nobles: ‘And so you shall, my friend, in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Let the honour fall to you and let them suffer for it!’ Baldwin offered thanks to God when he heard this. Then he spurred on his charger, brandished his spear and shouted at the top of his voice: ‘Aid me, Holy Sepulchre!’ Meanwhile further up the Turks had mounted and taken the high ground. They had a battalion of 50,000, each equipped with mailed hood and charger from Orkney, huge sharp lance and burnished sword.¹³⁵ All of them swore that the Christians were dead and on their way to martyrdom, bolstering each other’s resolve.

53

And now the French saw the whole countryside up in arms, with mountains and plains swarming with Turks. It was hardly surprising that some of them panicked. All were dismayed, cowards and valiant alike; but the brave and noble took courage [from their predicament]. They competed to be the first to mount their horses. The bishop of Le Puy addressed them: ‘My lords, hear from me what God has promised you. Our God and Father who was hanged on the Cross said that He would be avenged by His sons with swords of shining steel. According to Scripture, on the Day of Judgement four horns will ring out on Mount Tabor. The dead will be resurrected, and Our Lord will address the living in the terms He has handed down to us: “Come forward, those of you who did My bidding. When you saw Me dead, you gave Me burial; when I was naked you gave Me shoes and clothes; when I had nowhere to go you took Me in. So you will turn to the right as you enter My Paradise.”¹³⁶ There you will find St George and the intrepid St Demetrius and 100,000 of the dead taken up by God.’¹³⁷ And now look over here at those evil cowards the Saracens. Just hear them bawling and caterwauling! Be on your guard because they are itching to lash out at you; defend yourselves with your shields in the name of the Holy Spirit! I take all your sins on myself, the great

¹³⁵ As with Gascony and Montpellier, Orkney fits the rhyme scheme.

¹³⁶ The depiction of the Last Judgement resembles the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Pseudo-John*, rather than the biblical *Book of Revelation*. The quotation is from Matthew 25.31–46.

¹³⁷ St George and St Demetrius were two of the saints who rode to the help of the Christians at the battle of Antioch. Both were Byzantine warrior saints. See C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot, 2003): pp. 109–44 for St George, ‘the “star” warrior saint’; pp. 67–93 for St Demetrius, the defender of Thessaloniki. See Introduction, chapter 2, for discussion of the saints’ intervention at the battle of Antioch in the *GF* and dependants.

and the small. Anyone who dies here can be absolutely sure that his soul will rise to Paradise and find a place reserved amongst the Innocents.¹³⁸

54

When the Christians heard the brave Adhemar, not one was a big enough coward to remain unmoved. Baldwin Cauderon took the lead. A Saracen from Nicaea turned and rode towards him arrogantly: he was Soliman's son and his name was Hident. They exchanged ferocious blows that both felt keenly. Hident struck Baldwin full on as hard as he could, shattering his shield and damaging his hauberk with the pennon, ending up right against his skin. In return Baldwin struck him with all his might, piercing his shield and damaging his hauberk; he sliced open his chest, cut open his heart and knocked him to the ground dead, blood-soaked with the force of his lance-thrust. Then he drew his sword and grabbed another Saracen by the head. 'By the Holy Sepulchre!' he yelled. 'Lord God Omnipotent, help us today in what we do at your command. This is a superb way to begin a battle!'¹³⁹

55

Now imagine you see Lord Guy of Porsese in the fight, extremely well armed.¹⁴⁰ Without slackening pace he levelled his heavy, sturdy lance at the Saracens and made for a Turk, Pisant of Valeresse. He split his shield and knocked him to the ground, plunging his spear into his body and ramming it home; with one thrust he knocked him dead to the ground without a moment for confession. 'By the Holy Sepulchre!' he yelled, striking his way through the press of battle, 'Strike hard, noble lords, in the name of the Holy Mass. This will teach those Saracen bastards to go around boasting and despising God's divine law!' Now battle was thick on every side. May God help anyone who does not keep his promise!

56

Now imagine Eschnignart and Pinel in the battle. One went after Gautier, the other after Daniel.¹⁴¹ They struck them down as they rode up out of a dip in the

¹³⁸ The Massacre of the Innocents was a well-known theme. The twelfth-century Fleury playbook preserves the *Ordo ad repraesentandum Herodem*, ed. and trans. W. L. Smoldon (London, 1960).

¹³⁹ Killing as sport. See J. C. Payen, 'Une poétique du génocide joyeux: devoir de violence et plaisir de tuer dans le *Roland*', *O*, 6 (1979), pp. 226–36.

¹⁴⁰ Guy of Porsese's death from illness was described by AA, pp. 112–13.

¹⁴¹ Unclear who these are, or indeed who is Christian and who Saracen.

ground. When Enguerrand saw this he rose to the challenge. Wielding his lance he spitted Morel; he went after a pagan and struck his shiny new shield, plunging his weapon¹⁴² into his body up to the hilt, killing him and knocking him flying from his galloping horse. Hugh his father saw this exploit and was overjoyed. Immediately he spurred his bay colt after him and met Corbadan crossing a small bridge. With his knife-sharp sword he slashed down into the brain and flung him to the ground, dead and streaming with blood, at the entrance of a small meadow. Then he pursued Sigré, striking the nape of the neck and plunging the sword into his brain, flinging him to the ground from his horse Little Swallow, dead and streaming with blood. Then he spurred ahead across a brook and struck Torbant, the son of Roel, with his sword; he sliced his head in two as easily as a piece of sackcloth. Next he struck another Turk, Gobaut son of Madel, and sent his head flying like a turnip. Then he killed the rich Samuel. Now imagine Anselm of Ribemont in the battle, and the count of St-Gilles galloping up on his sorrel horse across a small valley.¹⁴³ Lord Enguerrand was carrying his shield slung to one side. His father called out to him: 'Tough old bulls are better than inexperienced bullocks! I have butchered Turks right, left and centre in front of your very eyes.'¹⁴⁴ On hearing that, Enguerrand was utterly amazed. Both lords spurred forward together and made Saracen blood flow in rivers, leaving the whole battlefield littered with guts and intestines.¹⁴⁵ Then they cried in unison: 'Strike hard, noble lords, and by the time dawn comes the castle will be ours!'

57

Tancred FitzMarquis struck Saladin and smashed through his gold-banded shield; he plunged the ash-wood spear right into his heart and sent him sprawling in death with one thrust of his lance.¹⁴⁶ Then he struck another Turk with his steel spear and sent his head flying onto the path in front of him. Imagine the sight of all those bodies sprawling in death. 'By the Holy Sepulchre, strike for your lives,

¹⁴² '[Q]uarrel' would normally be a cross-bow bolt, but here must have a more generalized meaning.

¹⁴³ We have Anselm's own account of the events at Nicaea, in two letters addressed to his archbishop Manasses of Reims: see Hagenmeyer, *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, nos. viii (pp. 144–6) and xv (pp. 156–60).

¹⁴⁴ The *Gran Conquista* preserves Enguerrand's riposte on a different occasion when his father Hugh is unhorsed in one of the many skirmishes: Book 2, chapter 35 (vol. 1, p. 533). See also Baudri of Bourgueil, p. 47, variant 1, a reading from ms G.

¹⁴⁵ Grotesquely realistic but a standard formula: compare *Guillaume*, vv. 529–30, 'Tels set .c. homes trovent de lur terre/Entre lur peiz trainant lur bowele' ('They found some seven hundred men from their lands dragging their bowels between their feet', Bennett's translation).

¹⁴⁶ It is not clear whether this is Soliman's son Saladin.

noble pilgrims,' they cried. 'Don't let these cowardly Saracens get away with their boasting and the way they put an end to the army of the poor near Nicaea. We won't let Soliman alone until we've put an end to him and destroyed Tervagant, Mohammed and Apollon.'

58¹⁴⁷

Now imagine Lambert son of Conon in the battle. He struck a Slav full on the chest: a splinter of the lance plunged right into his heart and Lambert flung him dead to the sandy ground with the full force of the thrust. 'By the Holy Sepulchre, cut your way through, noble lords!' he yelled. 'That will teach these wicked Saracens who despise Christianity to go around boasting of their achievements!'

59

Roger the Emperor came spurring forward and went for a Turk with his steel lance; he sliced open his chest, his heart and organs and flung him dead on the field with the force of his thrust. Then he went after another with his sharp sword and knocked his head flying as far as you could throw a stick. 'By the Holy Sepulchre, noble and honoured men,' he yelled, 'unleash everything you've got on these infidels, good knights!' Ah God! What a signal favour was granted to this race in being given the chance to do God's work as he has commanded!

60

Now imagine you see Walter of Domeart in battle. He struck an Azopart with his razor-sharp sword and sent his head flying one way, leaving his body to fall the other way.¹⁴⁸ Lord Bernard his son struck King Floart and sliced his heart in his chest into two halves: his body fell to the ground in a clearing¹⁴⁹ whilst his soul went into the Devil's keeping in Hell.¹⁵⁰ 'By the Holy Sepulchre,' he yelled, 'cut your way through, Bernard!'

¹⁴⁷ The next four *laissez* are notably short and formulaic.

¹⁴⁸ 'Azopart' is used by the Latin historians to refer to the Ethiopians: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 22–3.

¹⁴⁹ We cannot find the reading 'fart' attested anywhere in a meaningful sense, and so we have translated as 'sart', a clearing (T-L, vol. 9, p. 192); see also T-L, vol. 3, pp. 1291–2, for 'essart' in the sense of clearing enemies.

¹⁵⁰ Saracens in the *chanson de geste* are often portrayed as diabolical or associated with the Devil: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 349–52.

61

Now imagine Count Eustace of Boulogne making for a Turk with his spear of Viennese make. He knocked him dead into a reedbed with the thrust of his lance. Meanwhile his brother Baldwin killed Champenois, sending his head sailing into the undergrowth. He cried 'By the Holy Sepulchre, fellow Franks, cut your way through!'¹⁵¹

62

Now picture Godfrey of Bouillon in the battle. He called across to Count Stephen of Blois:¹⁵² 'My lord, take with you Baldwin Cauderon, Baldwin of Ghent who is very capable and his brother Ralph, Drogo of Nesle and 4000 noble men; go up into the mountains around this hill with a round top and make sure those inky-black Turkish villains do not catch us unaware.'¹⁵³ Soliman of Nicaea the worshipper of Mohammed has a large force with him, and none of them will fight fairly.' When Stephen heard this his heart was torn in two: how he wanted at that moment to be back in his house in Blois! As he took the pennon he trembled all over, twitching nervously from head to foot. Godfrey had the best of intentions in doing this but, alas God, what a waste! He got a poor reward for it later from Stephen with the lion on his shield: the noble lords lost out badly as a result of his activities.¹⁵⁴

63

Now the noble French knights turn and ride downhill to a hillock, following a disused path. They stopped at the top of a rise and let their banners billow out in

¹⁵¹ Eustace and Baldwin of Boulogne were Godfrey's elder and younger brothers respectively

¹⁵² The first appearance of the unfortunate Stephen, count of Blois. One of the foremost nobles in France, he was initially one of the main leaders of the Crusade. However, he left before the fall of Antioch, unable to see how the crusaders could survive; his report to Alexius was sufficiently damning that no reinforcements were sent. This proved a mortal blow to his reputation despite his later and heroic death in the Holy Land in 1101. K.B. Wolf suggests that Bohemond may have had a hand in this: 'Crusade and Narrative: Bohemond and the *Gesta Francorum*', *JMH*, 17 (1991), pp. 207–16. No contemporary account has a good word to say for him although RC is less damning than most, and OV has fun describing exactly what his wife Adela thought of the episode (vol. 5, pp. 324–5). The *Antioche* lampoons him mercilessly. See J. A. Brundage, 'An errant Crusader: Stephen of Blois', *T*, 16 (1960), pp. 380–95.

¹⁵³ 'Encrieme' is a standard description of Saracens: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 67–72.

¹⁵⁴ A narrative link forward. The lion on the shield may be ironic.

the wind. Count Stephen of Blois was in the lead. Tornicans blew a horn to rally his forces. Soliman heard it – God rot him! – and said to his men, ‘Let’s get a move on – we need to help Hisdent and proud Tornicans.’ At this 15,000 Turks flung themselves forward led by Soliman – may God be his downfall (as he will indeed, I think, once the lances are lowered for attack!). Imagine all those greedy, untrustworthy Turks surging forward in one mass (God confound them!), making at top speed for the mountain where the noble [Christian] warriors were. When Count Stephen saw their banners billowing, all the gold in Montpellier wouldn’t have been enough to persuade him he wanted to be there. Lord Baldwin of Ghent was the first to speak: ‘My fellow French lords, let us prepare to attack the infidels,’ and they replied, ‘Just let us at them!’

64

When the Turks came spurring up to our French knights, they swiftly mounted their fierce horses¹⁵⁵ and gave them their heads through the undergrowth down into a valley. Our men advanced across the stubble. Stephen of Blois held 2000 in reserve whilst the other 2000 took on the Turks, ripping open their hauberks and gold-patterned greaves. Those infidel Turkish bastards lost 2080 men, leaving them cold in death. The noble and courteous Baldwin Cauderon and the skilful Baldwin of Ghent rode in pursuit brandishing their high-quality Viennese swords.¹⁵⁶ May Jesus who was hanged on the Cross come to their aid!

65

Orchenais spurred forward right across the battlefield, yelling at the top of his voice in clear tones: ‘Alas, Lord Soliman! Your forces are taking heavy losses. Your son Hisdent has met his end in the wasteland.’¹⁵⁷ To hear this was a mortal blow to Soliman; he tore his hair, howling and lamenting bitterly: ‘Ah! My son and leader in knightly prowess, the man who has killed you could not have hurt me more.’

‘My lord,’ said Richenés, ‘why don’t we make a charge? That man there, out in front, with the glittering sword and a striped shield hung round his neck is the one who killed your son – may Mohammed’s curse be on him!’¹⁵⁸ Soliman heard this

¹⁵⁵ Literally ‘bred in the north’.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Viénois’ is another convenient rhyme word.

¹⁵⁷ Literally ‘terre gastée’, land laid waste. We have translated this as ‘wasteland’, referring both to the uninhabited lands around Nicaea (there is no obvious English equivalent for a term which evokes the large amount of uncultivated land separating one medieval town from another) and to land actually laid waste by competing armies.

¹⁵⁸ This was Baldwin Cauderon.

and his face darkened. He summoned 50 archers of his household. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'let me make you a solemn promise. If you can kill for me the knight with the striped blazon and deprive him of his existence, you will get a substantial amount of money and other rewards besides.' When the archers heard this, they swore to each other that they would kill the knight – may God protect him! So they shot off their arrows (God curse them!) and with the first volley killed Elias from our forces. Baldwin was enraged to see this and killed four Turks from among the Persian lords; the rest turned tail at top speed giving their horses full rein, yelling at the tops of their voices, 'Soliman of Syria, come and help your men – they are being massacred.'

66

Now imagine you see the emir Soliman spurring ahead, shouting at the top of his voice in clear tones: 'They must be an arrogant lot in the kingdom of France. Look at all these brave knights in front of me who wouldn't dream of running away from a Turk or a Persian.'

'My lord,' said Richenés, 'they will get no further. They have knocked down dead enormous numbers of our brave knights – the courtly Hisdent and young Saladin. Let us attack them for the honour of Tervagant.' So they sounded an elaborately worked horn and the pagans surged forward out of their ranks, cowardly and treacherous. It was a deadly battle and the bloodshed was vicious. On all sides there were lances splintered and pagans sprawled dead on the ground, mailed hauberks gaping open with links ripped apart, and Turks and Franks cut down, lying in pools of blood. Drogo of Nesle said to Baldwin of Ghent: 'Get someone to sound a horn and let us turn and regroup. Two thousand of our allies are waiting for us on that hill. If those treacherous cowards come down and follow us we are in line for an excellent skirmish.'

67

Baldwin of Ghent replied: 'My noble knights and lords – whatever you do don't rely on Count Stephen, because he must be the greatest coward between here and Dijon. When he sees the worshippers of Mohammed coming for him, every last scrap of his courage will turn out to have been left behind at home.'¹⁵⁹ With these words they gave the horses their heads across the sandy heath, with the Turks attacking and pursuing them in small groups; they rode without stopping all the way to the hill. The 2000 cried, 'My lords, what do you want us to do? In God's name let's turn and face up to these cowards.' This was Count Stephen's response:

¹⁵⁹ The Flemish knights mercilessly criticise Stephen. His cowardice here prefigures his later flight at Antioch.

‘Over my dead body. There must be easily 30,000 of those Turks and Slavs. If we go back to the main army of God we can get some reinforcements.’

68

Oliver of Jussi riposted straight away: ‘Listen to me, my lords, noble and brave knights that you are. Our brightly painted shields are still in one piece; we are not wounded in front or on the back; our hauberks, far from being ripped open, are still shiny; and our spears are not splintered but still as sharp as when we began. If we go scuttling back to the main army of God, the Bavarians and Germans will make the most of their triumph.¹⁶⁰ So let’s get on and attack the Turks in the name of God the All-Powerful and avenge Him on the infidels.’ At this our lords surged forward to fight. Imagine the fantastically hard-fought battle which followed! Baldwin Cauderon brandished his glittering sword; so did Drogo of Nesle, Baldwin of Ghent and Lord Guy of Porsese, the brave-hearted. Hugh of St-Pol and his son Enguerrand cut their way through the press of battle with their steel swords. Lord Stephen of Blois was in the lead. But when he saw how vicious things were in the press of battle, he cried: ‘Oh God, beautiful Father and Redeemer. I wish I could go and find Tancred of Apulia. Godfrey of Bouillon must think I am no more than a silly boy to have assigned me to fight the Turks in this ravine. If I hang around any longer, I shall be beyond God’s help!’ So he flung down the standard, turned his back and fled.

69

Richenés looked across and saw the standard flung down. He said to his Turks: ‘My good and honourable men, let us get on and avenge the renowned Hisdent.’¹⁶¹ And that is what they proceeded to do straight away, infidel bastards. Had you been there you would have seen so many sword-blows and so many Franks and pagans sprawling dead on the battlefield that the very grass growing there was drenched in blood. Stephen fled at full tilt while the French spurred off towards the valley. When they saw the standard abandoned on the ground Baldwin of Ghent said: ‘My honourable fellow countrymen, Lord Stephen of Blois has signed our death warrant.’

¹⁶⁰ An interesting take on Christian unity. This may reflect tensions between Franks and Germans: cf. Peter’s followers taunting each other at Civetot: AA, pp. 38–9.

¹⁶¹ This foreshadows the death of Brohadas in the battle of Antioch.

70

Drogo of Nesle said: 'Don't lose heart. In the name of God, Son of the Virgin Mary, let each and every one of us put up a good fight even though I know full well we are betrayed. Lord Stephen of Blois has failed in his duty to lead the army of God.' The Franks turned and fled across a meadow, with their sworn enemies the Turks in hot pursuit chopping off their heads with burnished swords. The lords nearly went berserk at the sight. They couldn't come to their assistance because of the sheer weight of numbers of the infidel bastards. However, Drogo of Nesle and Lord Guy rallied them as they saw the flower of the French forces overcome: their battle-cry of 'Montjoie!' put new heart into the troops, as you might imagine. Eighty knights lost their lives in the encounter. The Franks rallied their forces in the wasteland, ready to make life uncomfortable for the Persian cowards.

71

Even when the Turks began to shoot arrows from their Turkish bows, our Christian lords took no notice: on the contrary they went spurring towards them as fast as they could to chop off their heads with their high-quality Viennese swords. The clashing of steel swords was so great that the good Duke Godfrey heard it from the other side of the mountain. 'Keep up the good work in the name of the Holy Sepulchre, Franks!' he yelled.

72

Tancred of Apulia said: 'Listen to me. I can hear the noise of clashing over there on the other side of the hill.'¹⁶²

'Yes, I can hear it too,' said the duke of Bouillon. 'Come on, my lords,' said the count of Flanders, 'let's go and find out what is happening.' Lord Hugh of Vermandois added: 'Anselm of Ribemont, Ralph of Beaugency, Gerard of Gournay and Gerard of Cérisy are to stay with the army and not move an inch from here.' The lords replied: 'We are at your command.' So they spurred their horses and rode off. On the way they met Stephen, who was in a state of utter confusion and dismay. 'How do you think it's going?' said Count Robert. 'We are totally crushed!' replied Count Stephen. At this the brave lords looked at each other; then they saw the standard abandoned just as it had fallen to the ground. Count Robert of Flanders and Thomas of Coucy looked Stephen in the eyes and asked him firmly: 'Where did Drogo of Nesle flee to? Where are Baldwin of Ghent

¹⁶² Battles must have been very noisy affairs, with metal clashing on metal like simultaneous car crashes; cf. *Canso*, v. 542.

and Oliver of Jussi?’¹⁶³ Count Stephen replied: ‘Since you ask, they are in the thick of battle wearing their hauberks.’ On hearing this Count Robert spurred his horse forward and retrieved the standard which Stephen had flung away: he raised it above his head and brandished it, grasping it firmly. May the God who forgave Longinus come to Robert’s aid!¹⁶⁴ Now the Persians and Arabs are really up against it.

73

Meanwhile our noble lords are in the thick of battle. My God! Just imagine the sight of Drogo of Nesle, Guy of Porsese, Baldwin Cauderon, Enguerrand of St-Pol and his father Hugh killing enemies left, right and centre with their sharp swords. Lord Guy of Porsese looked across to the hillside and recognised the arms of Godfrey of Bouillon, Lord Hugh of Vermandois and Robert the Frisian. He yelled at the top of his voice: ‘My noble lords, now the Persians and Slavs are really in for it!’ The Turks turned tail shaking with fear; the Christians chased after them, spurring forward at top speed, but they were unable to catch up with the inky-black villains until they came upon the forces of Bohemond. On seeing this, the lords gave their horses free rein and the Normans and Bretons mounted. Everyone spurred forward as best he could, pursuing the Turks down across the sandy river plain and slicing into heads, chests and chins as they went. When the Saracens realised that they had nowhere to seek refuge, they called out to Richenés: ‘Your majesty, what shall we do now? The Franks are coming down on us like raging lions, and if once they catch us we are utterly lost!’ The Persians and Slavs were about to turn and flee when the duke and his companions surged up in front of them.

74

Bohemond saw the Turks turn and flee. He spurred his horse on, swung his shield in front of his body and landed a blow on Torgis, an infidel pagan. Torgis’ shield and mailed hood were of no use to him whatsoever: Bohemond plunged his razor-sharp spear right into his heart and sent Torgis reeling stone dead from his spirited warhorse. Then he drew his sword, which had a glittering golden hilt; it sliced right

¹⁶³ Thomas of Coucy, also known as Thomas of Marle or La Fère, is little mentioned in contemporary accounts of the Crusade; however he plays a major role in the *Jérusalem*. This is puzzling given his reputation for savagery which was extreme even by the standards of the twelfth century: see J. Riley Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 156–7.

¹⁶⁴ A further reference to the theme of the vengeance of Christ. Longinus was the centurion who plunged the Lance into Christ’s side according to the Gospel of Nicodemus. The Flemish retrieve the consequences of Stephen’s cowardice.

through anyone it touched. 'By the Holy Sepulchre!' he bellowed, 'Keep up the good work, my lords! The pagans are in disarray and falling back.' Richenés fled all the way down the slope to the valley, yelling at the top of his voice: 'Tornicant, my brother, make your escape right now! If you don't we are in serious trouble, because the Christians are hot on our heels. They are slaughtering our Saracens and going around cutting them to ribbons.' When Raymond of St-Gilles heard what the Persian was saying, he said to the Christians, 'You have something to be pleased about. The Saracen army is falling apart.' These words put new heart into them; they attacked the pagans and chased them at swordpoint right over the top of the hill. When the duke saw this, he thanked God and rallied his men with the cry, 'The Holy Sepulchre!' He fell upon the Turks with furious determination; anyone he struck ended up sliced in half. Soliman and his mighty army fled. The Turks and Arabs were in utter confusion; meanwhile our men turned for home with light and joyful hearts.¹⁶⁵ The brave soldiers cut off the heads of the infidels, loaded them into the mangonel and catapulted them into the city of Nicaea; they did this to demoralise the Turks.¹⁶⁶ Our Franks took 3000 alive and sent them all by sea straight to the shrewd emperor in Constantinople. The king was overjoyed at the sight of them. As a gesture of thanks he collected together shields and swords, bread and copious amounts of wine and had them dispatched to the army of God. The sailors got under way, running their colours up the mast; they made their way to Nicaea and dropped anchor in the harbour right outside and handed over the provisions to the Franks.¹⁶⁷ Now that the Franks had something to eat they offered thanks to God and swore by their Heavenly Father the Redeemer that they would not leave until they had taken mighty Nicaea.¹⁶⁸

75

At this point I should tell you what happened to Guy of Porsese.¹⁶⁹ He fell ill and was suffering badly; he had himself bled and that turned out to be a very bad idea,

¹⁶⁵ 'baut et lié et joiant' is another frequently used formula: cf. *Roland*, v. 96: 'Li empereres se fait e balz e liez' ('The emperor is joyful and content').

¹⁶⁶ Mentioned in contemporary accounts: e.g. AA, pp. 108–9. A mangonel was a large catapult with an arm which swivelled against a bar when released and fired a stone: France, *Western Warfare*, pp. 118–19. Using enemy heads as ammunition was designed to demoralise: cf. RM, p. 123.

¹⁶⁷ An interesting manoeuvre given that Nicaea is inland. But there may be a reminiscence here of the lake outside Nicaea to which the Crusaders transported ships overland to complete the blockade: *GF*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁸ As Duparc-Quioic comments, the text is confused at this point (*Edition*, pp. 98–9): a clumsy abridgement?

¹⁶⁹ These deaths are mentioned in passing in AA, and nowhere else (pp. 110–13). The *Antioche* embroiders them into a more detailed episode.

because something went wrong and he died as a result. Baldwin Cauderon lost his life on the same day. He was very ill, lying in his luxuriously equipped tent and beyond medical help. Meanwhile the Turks were catapulting stones, and one of them landed right near the tent; it smashed Baldwin of Ghent's head to smithereens so that bits of brain flew halfway across the tent.¹⁷⁰ Baldwin Cauderon heard what had happened. He asked for Bohemond to be summoned (in whom he placed confidence), the count of Flanders, Robert of Normandy and Tancred of Apulia along with the other nobles. 'My lords and noble Franks,' he said, 'today our great comradeship will be broken, and the great friendships which were far from trivial. Lord Robert of Flanders and Robert of Normandy, may God watch over for you the honour and extensive lands that I have held by your knightly courtesy.' When the lords heard these words, a collective groan was heard,¹⁷¹ and with these same words, his soul left his body.

76

Would you like to hear what the lords did next? Outside the town next to a flight of steps was a church dedicated to St Simeon. They reverently carried the bodies to it. That night men from Flanders and Burgundy mounted a vigil, lighting 30 candles round the bodies that burned until the sermon was given the following day. They carried the bodies to a round churchyard, dug a grave, and laid Guy and Baldwin of Ghent and Baldwin Cauderon to rest in it. The bishop of Le Puy preached the sermon; a censer was swung, and they returned to their quarters. The Turks watched all this from up on top of the walls. Persians and Slavs put their heads together, muttering, 'These people are prouder than any beast or lion. There is no way we are going to hold out against them for long if the sultan of Iconium does not come to our aid.'

'Our leaders have let us down. So much for our Apollo and Mohammed!' said Saladin.¹⁷² 'If they overpower us we are lost'. Soliman the Younger responded: 'Don't lose heart just yet. I shall go to the good King Garsion to get reinforcements.'¹⁷³ He slipped out all alone that night and spurred as hard as he could ride all the way to where his father was; nobody went with him.

¹⁷⁰ A perennial hazard in siege warfare. Simon de Montfort famously lost his life in the same way at the siege of Toulouse: *Canso de la Crozada: La chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, ed. E. Martin-Chabot (3 vols, Paris, 1931–60), *laisse* 205, vv. 122–9.

¹⁷¹ Duparc-Quioc brackets these words, which are missing in mss B, F and G, and different in C.

¹⁷² Saladin's death was reported in *laisse* 57, but if it is the same person he appears to have been resurrected.

¹⁷³ Yaghi-Sian, the Turkish Governor of Antioch. He plays a major role later in the poem. This prefigures the later mission of Sansadoine to the Sultan of Persia.

77

Now listen to how the Turks made a tactical error. Saladin said: 'Noble and hardy lords, both our leaders have completely let us down. They have made their own get-away, leaving us stuck in here. There is no point looking to them for any help or support. So we'd better come up with some plan for saving our own skins. The Franks have made a magnificently determined assault on the city. We could surrender without any qualms if we were sure we wouldn't be killed or maimed. We could give this excellent city up to the Franks – or to the emperor to hold.' At this precise moment who should come spurting up to them but Taticius No-Nose, shouting at the top of his voice: 'Give me the city! Hand it over to me! I swear on my honour that you will not be killed or come to any harm!' When they heard this the Turks were absolutely delighted. They flung open the doors and the Franks streamed through.¹⁷⁴

78

Our Franks marched in, full of pride at taking the city; meanwhile, the Turks retreated hastily in a disorganised rabble. In the valley of Gurhenie they bumped into Soliman.¹⁷⁵ When he saw his people crowding towards him, he said: 'Where on earth are you going in such a state? Tell me the worst – what has happened to my city?' His entire household dissolved into tears and replied, 'You will never enter it again as long as you live!' At this Soliman was utterly beside himself with rage. He fainted four times flat onto the flower-strewn grass, one faint after another.¹⁷⁶ When he finally got up he lamented at the top of his voice: 'Alas, my good city! You were equipped to cope with anything! There is no way I could have lost you without treachery of some kind! I shall die of grief if I lose all my riches too.' That night he bivouacked in the middle of the fields outside Nicaea. As soon as dawn rose the following morning he got up, along with his mighty army, and swore as he sacrificed to Mohammed that in future he would banish all pleasures from his life until he had taken revenge on those who had betrayed his city. With this he turned about and set off with his much depleted household. He had hardly gone

¹⁷⁴ Nicaea was indeed handed over by its inhabitants, but to the emperor's representative Boutoumites. The Franks saw this as a betrayal that further soured relations between them and the Byzantines, resenting the fact that they could not plunder the city: e.g. RA, pp. 26–7; FC, pp. 82–3. The *Antioche* passes over this lightly.

¹⁷⁵ 'Gurhenie' is evidently the same place as AA's 'Degorganhi', which AA says was 'nowadays called Orellis', i.e. Dorylaeum (pp. 128–9).

¹⁷⁶ Fainting with emotion was a perfectly acceptable reaction in the *chanson de geste*: see Rychner, p. 130. Compare *Roland*, v. 2215 for Roland fainting at Oliver's death, and v. 2422 for a mass faint at the news of Roland's death. However, Soliman takes it to ridiculous extremes. Evidently he still has a son of some kind left.

any distance through the wasteland when he happened on his son coming along the road towards him. His son asked him for the latest news. 'May the blessing of Mohammed attend you, O my beautiful son!' he replied, 'Those godforsaken wretches have taken my city, curse them. There is no refuge for us until we reach Antioch, unless the sultan of Iconium comes to our aid.'¹⁷⁷ With these words the degenerate pagan bastards turned tail and made for Iconium without drawing rein. Meanwhile the Franks settled into the well-equipped city of Nicaea.

79

So, God be praised, the Franks had taken Nicaea! The nobles marched in, overjoyed, delighted and happy. They were merciful to the citizens: nobody who agreed to turn to Jesus was harmed, and a total of 700 men and women were baptised.¹⁷⁸ The Franks stayed there seven days to rest and recover, burnishing their helmets and mending the mail of their hauberks. Meanwhile Soliman continued on his mission to find help, snarling with rage and every so often mourning his forcible expulsion from Nicaea.¹⁷⁹ 'My lord,' said his son, 'don't lose heart. Mohammed may have turned against you for the moment, but if he so decides, then the Christians will not extricate themselves easily no matter how cocky they are now.'¹⁸⁰

80

So off goes Soliman, furiously unhappy, wringing his hands and tearing his hair.¹⁸¹ He whined unashamedly and non-stop in front of his companions: 'Alas, my poor great city of Nicaea! Ah, the memory of the happy days I have spent within your walls! Alas Lord Mohammed, my noble and honoured lord, we of Nicaea did everything to serve and honour you! In return you have granted large numbers of my requests and granted my wishes. Now there is no doubt about it: you have dozed off. You've made a bad move by allowing the Franks to seize your extensive territories where until now you have been worshipped and glorified.'¹⁸² He was so

¹⁷⁷ Iconium was held by the Seldjuk Turks.

¹⁷⁸ This did not happen much on the First Crusade, see B. Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 57–9.

¹⁷⁹ An example of the montage technique sometimes used in the text.

¹⁸⁰ This and the following *laisses* are a good example of *laisses similaires*: Soliman's grief is repeated in each, but develops differently each time. See Rychner for analysis of this technique in the *Roland* (pp. 117–24).

¹⁸¹ RM also makes much of Soliman's lack of moral fibre: pp. 113–14.

¹⁸² The rejection of gods in defeat is standard Saracen behaviour: compare *Roland* vv. 2580–85, and see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 407–8. For discussion of Saracen stereotypes see Introduction, chapter 3.

overcome with emotion that he fainted four times straight off. His son said, 'My noble and very upset father, there is no reason to make quite so much fuss – at least you are still in one piece.'

'My beautiful son,' replied Soliman, 'there is every reason. Nicaea is the key to my entire kingdom.' They rode past settlements and towns, castles and strongholds, and did not stop all the way to Iconium. That day the Sultan was to hear more than enough about how so many pagans lost their lives, all recounted with floods of tears.

81

Now the Turks come riding up, choked with emotion. Soliman's heart was bursting with grief and he was the first to speak. 'Alas, Lord Mohammed! You used to be powerful; now see how you are humiliated by the Franks who have seized Nicaea.¹⁸³ They have even taken my highest tower, one that no Frank should ever have entered.' All the pagans burst into tears in sympathy with their lord, and Soliman fainted, quite overcome with emotion.¹⁸⁴ By now they were near Iconium where they intended to seek refuge and help. Soliman came down into the fields nearby to mourn and called his son, Soliman the Younger.

82

King Soliman of Nicaea came down into the fields around Iconium and called his devoted son over to him. 'My handsome son,' he said, 'go to my lord. Beg his indulgence for the love of Mohammed, and tell him as effectively as you can all about my sorry situation.'

'Your lightest wish is my command,' replied his son. He put on his very best equipment and took Orgaie with him.¹⁸⁵ Hand in hand the two of them entered the city, stocked with everything they might need. They made their way unobtrusively through the city asking directions for finding the sultan. Faburs, the king's adviser, came out to them and told them that the sultan and all his lords were up [in the palace]. 'Tell me who you are and where you come from,' he said. 'When were

¹⁸³ Literally 'Terra Major'. This is a standard term for France and by extension the Franks in the *chanson de geste*: see A. Moisan, *Répertoire des noms propres de personnes et de lieux cités dans les chansons de geste françaises et les œuvres étrangères dérivées* (5 vols, Geneva, 1986), vol. 2, pp. 1421–2.

¹⁸⁴ This follows Duparc-Quioç's edition, which gives 'tenror'. However 'terror' might make more sense.

¹⁸⁵ The name invokes traditional Saracen pride, 'orgueil': see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 197–201, and G. Herman, 'Some functions of Saracen names in Old French epic poetry', *RN*, 11 (1969), pp. 427–34.

you last in Nicaea? I want to know. A dark-skinned pagan told us a while ago that Soliman of Nicaea had been in battle with the Franks.'

'He most certainly has,' replied Soliman's son. 'He fought a battle with them and was completely routed.' Faburs was appalled to hear this. He called Soliman's son to him and asked, 'So who are you, my handsome young bringer of such terrible news?' The young man replied, 'You ought to know who I am. Soliman is my father and I his son. My noble family have been very good to you in the past.'

'Ah, of course – now I recognise you,' replied Faburs. 'Which one of the brothers are you? What was your name again?'

'My lord,' replied the young man, 'please believe me. My name is Soliman and I am the eldest son.' Faburs was delighted to hear this. 'So where is your father Soliman staying?'

'He is awaiting the sultan's pleasure down in the fields outside the city.'

83

The two lords talked all the way as Faburs led them through the gate and across the great bridge, up to the steps outside the palace and straight to the sultan's residence without stopping once. Soliman of Nicaea fell to his knees and kissed his shoes and the hem of his tunic four times.¹⁸⁶ 'My noble lord,' he cried, 'take pity on me for the love of Mohammed. My lord, I have come to tell you of the havoc wreaked by the good duke of Bouillon. The Franks and Burgundians have turned their attention to you. They have already taken Nicaea and the surrounding territories from you and left them scorched earth.' A shiver went down the sultan's back when he heard this, and he scowled angrily at Soliman's son.¹⁸⁷ 'Who are you?' he barked. 'What is your name?'

'I am the son of Soliman, who is awaiting your pleasure in the scrublands outside the city and sunk in the depths of misery,' he replied. 'Well, you look like a raving lunatic to me,' replied the sultan. This made the young man frown and draw his sword from beneath his silken surcoat. He said loudly to ensure that everyone could hear: 'By the religion we both believe in, let me tell you that if you were not my lord you would already be regretting having made such stupid comments – I would have chopped your head off at the chin!' The sultan looked at his blonde hair, his sparkling eyes and open honest face.¹⁸⁸ He rose, took him by the tunic, and sat him down beside him on a low marble dais. He kissed him four times and

¹⁸⁶ The various Solimans can get confusing, but this is Soliman the younger, Soliman the older's son.

¹⁸⁷ The initially unfriendly reception prefigures the treatment of Sansadoine by the Sultan of Persia later in the text.

¹⁸⁸ Classic description of beauty. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 58–63, for similar descriptions of Saracens and compare Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, ed. and trans. C. Méla and O. Collet (Paris, 1994), vv. 2715–46; see also *Le Roman de Flamenca, nouvelle*

addressed him, asking about the crushing defeat they had suffered. Soliman's son replied, 'My lord, it could not be worse; we have lost both Hisdent and Tornicant.' At this tears flowed from the sultan's eyes and he fainted four times straight off in the middle of his residence. When he recovered he addressed Soliman the younger in ringing tones.

84

'My friend,' said the sultan, 'are you quite sure? Have the French lords really shown themselves in this light?'

'By Mohammed, my lord, doesn't our story prove it? After all, they have captured your noble city of Nicaea from us!' At this the sultan flung his head back. 'By Mohammed my god and by my royal dignity! Just let me fight them in in the fields right outside Nicaea and see me slice through a thousand necks with my sharp sword to regain all my territory!' By now evening was approaching and the day nearly at an end. The pair of them retired to an inner chamber where, goodness me, they were certainly well looked after! As soon as it was daybreak the sultan arose and got dressed, donning an expensive silk robe with a beautifully embroidered cross of gold. He took Soliman the younger and Orgaie along with him. The doors of the mosque were unbarred and the sultan went in to adore his god. Then he came out again, bounded down the steps, mounted his horse along with his entire nobility and sought out Soliman the older where he was camping in the fields. He burst into tears at the sight of him. They exchanged four fervent kisses of greeting and sat down side by side on a striped silken cloth.

85

Soliman was sunk in the depths of depression as he took his place next to the sultan. 'How are things with you?' asked the sultan. 'We are utterly crushed,' replied Soliman. 'The French nobles have swept into Nicaea. Unless you take pity on me I have not so much as a single acre of land left. Unless you regain them I have lost the castles for good.'

'Don't get so upset,' replied the sultan. 'Tomorrow I shall muster 100,000 Turkish soldiers for you.'¹⁸⁹ At this Soliman fell prostrate at his feet. The sultan raised him up protesting his devotion. Without delay the two summoned their mules and the Saracens swung into the saddle from their golden stirrups. They made for the great city at a leisurely pace and were served with food when they arrived.

occitane du treizième siècle, ed. U. Gschwind (2 vols, Berne, 1976), vv. 1564–737, for *reductio ad absurdum*.

¹⁸⁹ The Saracens are shown following the norms of western feudal behaviour.

86

The sultan went up to the main reception hall. Meanwhile a spy knelt down in front of Soliman and whispered so that nobody else heard: ‘Mohammed bless you, my lord and emperor! If you had all your nobility around you at this moment, you could find the Franks in the valley of Gurhenie.’ Soliman blessed Mohammed on hearing this, and then swore by his power – in which he placed his faith – that once he got on the track of the Franks with his glittering sword they who had come from the great land would rue the day they ever took Nicaea.

87

Soliman summoned Daheri, Torcant, Richenés, Barolfe and his son Tornicant, Torsolt of Tiberias, Multrel and Kinkanant. ‘I order you at my command to form the advance force of the army. Take 50,000 Slavs and Persians to help you. By the divine Mohammed, proceed with caution so that the brave French knights do not ambush you and continue to do so until your advance position is well established. Should you come across Bohemond and Tancred of Apulia, my strong and noble lords, do not kill them on any account – bring them back here to me in one piece so I can take revenge on them for the death of my son Hisdent.’¹⁹⁰ ‘My lord, your lightest wish is our command!’ said the Turks. With that they turned and set off – may God overthrow them!

88

The vanguard took their leave and moved off. Soliman remained where he was, his heart in turmoil. The sultan looked across to him and saw Orgaie on his knees, forehead bent to the ground.¹⁹¹ He commented to Soliman, ‘That comes as rather a surprise. Who is that warrior down at your feet?’

‘My nephew,’ replied Soliman, ‘here to recover his lands and fiefs.’ When he heard this the sultan offered thanks to Mohammed and granted Orgaie everything [he sought] for the sake of his uncle. Soliman of Nicaea thanked the sultan effusively. The sultan raised him to his feet and kissed him three times. ‘My lord,’ said Soliman, ‘enough speeches for the moment. I want to get out there and find the Franks who have done me so much damage. I shall never rest as long as they have the upper hand. I commend you to Mohammed who has done so much to help us.’ At this 40,000 Turks made their way down from the wooden decking

¹⁹⁰ It was actually Baldwin Cauderon who killed him in *laisse* 54.

¹⁹¹ An accurate description of the Islamic prayer attitude. This is the first we have heard of Orgaie being Soliman’s nephew.

following the advance guard they had already sent. Now let us turn our attention to the Franks and see how they have been getting on.

89

This song is brilliantly crafted, woven together in excellent verse.¹⁹² So listen to it, my lords, and may God come to your aid! Blessed be France and absolved from sin in recognition of the enormous and virtuous army which she sent to conquer the infidels and take the Holy Land. They did not waste any time on flying falcons from the leash and not one knight took his lady along for the ride: instead they focused their full attention on the True Cross and the Holy Sepulchre that was the reason for their journey.¹⁹³ In Jerusalem itself the inhabitants could not speak openly and the Word of God went unheard. But now is the moment for the Franks to wrest it from the infidels – God's blessing on those who surrendered it to them! The Franks have taken Nicaea; they have broken down its defences, defeating and slaughtering Soliman's forces. They loaded their scant provisions onto pack animals, intending to go all the way along the main road without attracting attention; [they got their people on the move to Antioch] but the army will be devastated before they ever get there.¹⁹⁴ Alas, God! what they suffered that day at the hands of the pagan cowards who fell on them! As they made their way into the valley of Gurhenie, they ran into Soliman who rushed down on them out of the fog, accompanied by 100,000 Turks all yelling at the tops of their voices.¹⁹⁵ God in Heaven confound them!

90

Our young French squires were riding along happily, with horses and pack animals to carry their provisions and tents and pavilions to shelter them from the heat. Little did they know what was waiting round the corner. Bohemond of Sicily decided to

¹⁹² For the metaphor of weaving a text see GN's description of the *GF*, 'verbis contexta plus equo simplicibus' ('woven out of excessively simple words'), p. 24; and of FC's text, 'attexitur' ('it is woven'), p. 155.

¹⁹³ Perhaps a comment on the Second Crusade, when the papal call to arms, 'Quantum praedecessores' (1146), implied that women and children should be left at home, and specifically warned against taking 'dogs or hawks or other things that are signs of lasciviousness' – both pieces of advice were notoriously flouted by Eleanor of Aquitaine, queen of France. See L. and J. Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality 1094–1274* (London, 1981), pp. 58–9.

¹⁹⁴ The line in square brackets is added by Duparc-Quioe from ms C since the following line makes little sense without it.

¹⁹⁵ The noise made by the Turks at Dorylaeum is reported in *GF*, p. 18.

leave the main army and see what land he could conquer with his own forces. But he was to find himself fighting a battle he never expected to fight. Before evening you will see him utterly terrified and unable to hold out any longer even if the prize was all the gold God ever created. Had it not been for the eminent Godfrey, Bohemond would have regretted the consequences every single day of his life and would never have regained his position as long as he lived.¹⁹⁶

91

The army rode joyfully on in its quest for God. They came up out of a valley onto a level plain. When they reached an arched bridge which marked the point where a river spread out, Bohemond turned off with his countrymen the count of Normandy and Count Rotrou de Perche. They rode in search of the valley of Gurhenie.

92

The duke of Bouillon, who led our army in the name of Almighty God the Redeemer, rode along with them. They went a short way further then set up camp. Now I shall tell you how things went badly wrong. The Turks attacked Bohemond before nightfall, spurting to the attack at full speed. ‘Gentlemen and noble lords,’ said Richenés, ‘look – there is the Frankish army scattered and undefended.’ The pagan bastards spurred towards them straight away in a massed attack. Firstly they wheeled towards the women, sweeping the young and attractive ones onto their saddles and twisting the breasts of the feeble and elderly.¹⁹⁷ With their mothers dead, the babies howled, crawling onto their chests to find their breasts and suckling the corpses of their dead mothers – a truly painful sight. They should dwell in the realm of the Innocents.

93

‘Gentlemen,’ said Richenés, ‘praise be to Tervagant – we have mounted a successful attack on the Frankish knights. Keep up the good work with those sharp swords

¹⁹⁶ At this point it is more likely that the army was divided to relieve the pressure on supplies, as historical sources say. The motive here imputed to Bohemond reflects his later actions. Godfrey’s role in riding to the rescue is also the story told by AA, pp. 128–37.

¹⁹⁷ There were women on the Crusade; as elsewhere the author uses their presence to add dramatic colour rather than historical fact. RM uses them similarly to add pathos: see the lament of Walo’s wife, p. 140, and babies trying to suckle in vain, p. 157. See Introduction, chapter 3.

of yours. There are Bohemond and Tancred of Apulia: let's see if we can capture them as a prize for the sultan.' The Saracens and Persians were all inspired by this, and killed 40 of our knights on the battlefield. Bohemond was deeply concerned to see this. 'Gentlemen and noble Frankish lords,' he said, 'these infidels have mounted a surprise attack on us. Let us charge them in return.' At this the valiant knights galloped at full tilt towards [the enemy] and were poised to inflict anger and pain when the pagan Soliman approached along a valley.

94

'Gentlemen and noble lords,' said Soliman, 'I can see the Franks down in that valley giving battle their all: I heard the din created by their burnished steel swords from here. Let's go and help our men – they certainly need it!' Without further prompting the cowardly wretches galloped up to them with lowered lances to begin the slaughter. Twenty of our knights were decapitated. Tancred nearly went berserk at the sight. Meanwhile Bohemond was griefstricken to see his forces getting the worst of it. He made for Torcan with his top-quality steel sword: Torcan's mailed hauberk was of no use whatsoever because Bohemond plunged the blade right into his heart and knocked his diabolical adversary flying to his death with the force of his lance thrust.

95

Now picture Lord Tancred's brother in battle, a strong knight known as William: he was very young, newly knighted, and unable to contain his impatience to be armed for battle.¹⁹⁸ He wheeled his horse round into the thickest press of the battle and made for Orgaie: he struck him with his enamelled spear,¹⁹⁹ slicing his heart in half in his chest and knocking him dead onto the battlefield with the force of his thrust. Then he struck down Daheri on one side of his chest so that he flung him down dead in one long thrust. When his lance broke he pulled out his razor-sharp sword and knocked Wiltre and Baroffle sprawling and mutilated in death with their standard flung to the ground.

¹⁹⁸ RC gives a detailed account of William's death (pp. 49–50); AA gives less detail (pp. 130–31).

¹⁹⁹ Typical of the luxury portrayed in the *chanson de geste*. At *Guillaume*, vv. 1110–11, for example, hauberks and helmets are ornamented in gold. See Rychner, pp. 132–7. However, luxuriously decorated weapons did exist: cf. for example the mid-thirteenth century Conyers falchion from Durham Cathedral, which is engraved and enamelled.

96

Those on the battlefield could hear a huge commotion. William drew his sword to give him comfort, invoking the Lord who gave His body to suffer pain and martyrdom for our sake. 'God my Lord and Father, who has all in His keeping, I commend my body and soul to Your Holy Spirit,' he said. Then he landed a massive blow on Corsolt of Tabarie, plunging the sword right down into his brain so that, like it or not, the king's soul was driven from his body. 'My handsome nephew,' said Soliman, 'what a way to see you die! I think I shall go mad with grief if I cannot avenge you.'²⁰⁰ He spurred on his horse ready for the kill, and at that precise moment looked across the plain and saw Robert of Normandy emerging from ambush.

97

Now the Normans fell on the savage bastard, and you can imagine for yourselves what a remarkable battle ensued and how William fell on this outlandish people. He made for Richenés and struck him in the stomach with a spear; then he knocked off Saladin's head.²⁰¹ The Turks were appalled when they saw how bad things were, and yelled out their wacry in defiance. William's response was to kill Lord Corholt then and there on the plain. At this Soliman did not hesitate: he posted 500 crossbowmen up on the mountain with orders to fire at the young knight who was inflicting so much damage on his forces. Young William was horrified when he saw them on the field of battle. He cried out: 'Tancred, where is your banner? Look at all these people about to fall on me!' Then he picked up a spear that was lying on the field and charged Tornicant, plunging the spear into his stomach and knocking him with one thrust dead onto the battlefield. Soliman was broken-hearted at the sight: 'Mohammed, bring justice on him who does not worship you. I have every right in the world to want satisfaction from the man who has taken my son from me.' In a rage he swung round his horse from Carthage and slaughtered two knights, sending them sprawling from their horses. When Bohemond saw this he raised his standard. Within minutes more than 1000 Turks were dead on the spot. But so was our (young) William, gone beyond hope of recovery. At this Tancred tortured himself nearly to the point of keeling over dead in the middle of the battlefield.²⁰² He drew out his sword, its hilt all bloody: anyone he caught had no chance of escaping death.

²⁰⁰ Another nephew; see Orgaie at *laisse* 88.

²⁰¹ He has already been killed once at *laisse* 57.

²⁰² Standard over-reaction in the *chanson de geste*: compare, for example, *Raoul de Cambrai*, ed. and trans. S. Kay (Oxford, 1992), vv. 680–83.

98

Now listen to what the Persians and Slavs did: they decapitated 50 of Bohemond's knights, slicing their heads off below the chin. One messenger got away, spurring without stopping to the tents where Godfrey, the noble duke of Bouillon, was encamped.²⁰³ Godfrey asked for news when he saw the Burgundian: he replied with a fluency born of desperation. 'My lord and noble son of a lord,' he said, 'for the love of Him who suffered for us and in the name of the Holy Sepulchre that is our goal, come and help Bohemond and his companion Tancred!' The duke of Bouillon was profoundly upset, whilst the bishop of Le Puy burst into tears.²⁰⁴ Some 3000 horns sounded out in the army of God, giving the signal for French and Normans and Bretons, Germans and Frisians to arm themselves and mount their horses so that they could hasten to help Tancred.

99

It was a beautiful clear day; the sun rose up the sky and at midday the heat was searing. The troops were parched with thirst and Tancred's men were desperate for water. The women from home came to their assistance. There were considerable numbers of women and girls. They rolled up their sleeves, stripped off their long robes and fetched water for the well built knights in assorted pots, bowls and gilded metalware.²⁰⁵ Drinking this gave new strength to the soldiers, and at that point the help they so badly needed arrived. They turned the attack on the Persians and Slavs; with the Christians swarming over the fields and down the valley, Soliman was now completely routed.

100

Soliman was so intent on saving his own skin that he paid no attention to the Christian army; the first the enemy bastards knew about it was when they heard

²⁰³ The role of the messenger at Dorylaeum was crucial: the army had split, one part was attacked and it was vital to get a message to the other part. This appears in many sources: *GF*, p. 19; *AA*, pp. 132–3. The hero of the Occitan version, Golfier of Las Tours, was credited unhistorically with saving the day in this way: see *Canso*, pp. 10–11 and 343. The same story is alluded to in the *Gran Conquista*, Book 2, chapter 5 (vol. 1, pp. 439–41), and alluded to by the troubadour Uc de Pena, *Trobadorgedichte*, ed. A. Kolsen (Halle, 1925), poem 30, vv. 33–40 (pp. 66–8).

²⁰⁴ Tears were perfectly acceptable in the *chanson de geste*. Compare *Roland*, vv. 2415–21, where the Franks weep for the fallen.

²⁰⁵ This episode is attested in *GF*, p. 19. The *Antioche* and *Jérusalem* return repeatedly to this theme: see Introduction, chapter 3.

the noble Duke Godfrey shouting. The Persian infidels were caught totally on the hop. They sought to make their escape by wheeling round an ancient spur of rock only to find the stern-faced Raymond, the bishop of Le Puy, the count of Normandy and Taticius No-Nose in his hauberk coming down towards them through the defile. They fell on the pagans ferociously and overwhelmed them with the force of their attack, killing 4700. ‘Alas!’ said Soliman, ‘My god has turned against me. The Christian forces have taken my lands, my wife, my children and my prosperous city.’²⁰⁶ Why ignore the facts? They have utterly defeated me. I can see my household lying dead in the valley of Gurhenie and they have taken from me by force every last scrap of my wealth.’ Day faded and night came down; it would leave slowly and painfully. Now the tables were turned on the infidels God hates, and their gains went to the army of God. The Turks decided to camp in a meadow. There, however, St George and St Demetrius launched an attack on them, throwing them into such panic that the Turks called on each other to kill them, landing great blows on their own men with their razor-sharp swords.²⁰⁷ They scrambled onto their swift warhorses in total confusion, one pursuing another in utter frenzy. The chase lasted seven-and-a-half leagues. Our Franks pursued them (Jesus help them!), agog at the miracle wrought by the Son of the Virgin Mary. By God, the Turks left some very rich pickings, tents and pavilions and canopies all for the taking! The army of God made an excellent meal on the food the Turks had left behind and retired to the tents as soon as possible.²⁰⁸

101

Our noble knights encamped for the night. That day the clerics, monks and priests put on their vestments, blessed some holy water and buried the bodies of the fallen. The bishop of Le Puy said, ‘We are fighting a holy war. The souls of those we are burying here will not be in bondage like ours and they will experience no pain until the Day of Judgement.’ They slept all night until day broke.

102

The following dawn they all arose, Burgundians, French, Flemish, Normans and Bretons. As we know it was a Saturday. A dust-storm gathered force. Amid the whirling clouds of sand 1000 died of sheer thirst, women and girls, sergeants and

²⁰⁶ The first time we hear of Soliman’s wife. She is referred to by AA, pp. 136–7.

²⁰⁷ As at *laisse* 53, a presaging of St George and St Demetrius’ intervention in the battle of Antioch.

²⁰⁸ This prefigures the aftermath of the battle of Antioch, where the Christians similarly enjoy the Turks’ supper: *laisse* 367. This derives from RM, p. 173.

pages, while the powerful Gascon horses were on their last legs with exhaustion.²⁰⁹ Eventually they came to a meandering thread of water; the horses drank and then the knights. That night they made camp at the fountain of Raymond, where there was a chapel on top of the hill.²¹⁰ When the comrades of Christ moved off, Bohemond and his companions turned off and rode all the way to Tarsus without stopping.²¹¹

103

Meanwhile Soliman went on his way, a mixture of furious anger and miserable uncertainty in his defeat.²¹² 'Alas,' he said, 'I am utterly miserable and the unluckiest man in the world! My entire dominion is shamefully lost. Whatever will my wild-haired cousin the sultan say to me?'²¹³ What will my uncle Tribuans and my brother Bares make of it all? Nicaea is lost, my noble city where my every whim was fulfilled. One thing I can say for certain: I was born under an unlucky star. Where are you now, my handsome son Richenés? How can I be comforted for the loss of Tornicant and Hisdent? Nothing can console me in my grief!'

'My lord,' said Butor, 'making all this fuss about those you have lost doesn't show you in a very good light. Don't forget that you still have three sons, of whom I am the eldest.'²¹⁴ Make for Tarsus at top speed: you can get supplies there and fortify the town – it has a good strong citadel and you will have nothing to fear there. I really think you should take this advice, my noble lord and father.'

104

The pagan Soliman went on his way racked with grief, a mixture of furious anger and deep misery. 'Alas, my noble son Tornicans – what an evil fortune was yours! Alas, Hisdent and Richenés – how desperately I feel your loss! When I get to my prosperous city of Tarsus, all those Saracens and Persians are going to come out and ask me what I have done with my children who were famous for their bravery

²⁰⁹ The ravages of thirst in Anatolia are graphically described by AA, pp. 138–41.

²¹⁰ The fountain of Raymond is not found elsewhere.

²¹¹ In fact Tancred rode to Tarsus, not Bohemond.

²¹² The following three *laissez similaires* form a set piece underlining Soliman's loss and his status as the perennial loser.

²¹³ Not obvious why he should be so described. The scribe of ms C changed the description to 'onerés', 'honoured'.

²¹⁴ As Duparc-Quioic comments in her note here, 'tout cela est fort confus' (*Edition*, p. 126). Soliman has an apparently endless family of sons conjured up to be killed off at will: at *laisse* 51 he starts with two, several have been killed, including Saladin twice, and now he has three.

and nobility. All I can say in return is that the Frankish nobles have killed them!’ At this he would have fainted dead away and fallen from his gently ambling mule if a nearby Publican had not grabbed his arm.²¹⁵

105

Soliman went on his way sunk in gloom and misery and would not be comforted by relative or friend. ‘Alas, my noble son Tornicans – what an evil fortune was yours! Alas, Hisdent and Richenés – it was my fault that you died! And how can I leave my good city of Nicaea to the invaders!’ He drew his razor-sharp sword and was just about to plunge it into his heart when the brave and noble Butors grabbed it from him. And so they rode at a relaxed pace until they came to Tarsus. Here the citadel was well stocked with bread, wine and meat; however, Soliman could not face waiting for the Franks and left immediately.²¹⁶

106

Soliman ensured his city was well stocked; when he left he made for Mamistra. Now let us turn to the Franks and tell you where their journey has taken them. They left the valley of Boutentrot behind them and made for Tarsus non-stop.²¹⁷ At this point another company left the main army: Baldwin of Boulogne with Peter of Stadeneis, Rainald the strong and Baldwin of Le Bourg.²¹⁸ Baldwin decided to follow Tancred, and they rode for four days without stopping. During all that time they found not one blade of grass nor any grain. The horses became exhausted and blown, to the point where they were almost too tired to move. The squires carried the hauberks on their backs while the knights slouched along grumpily on foot; before long their hose had worn into holes and their shoes fallen to pieces so that their feet were bleeding, which made them weep tears of pain. When they looked up they saw the Christian forces in front of them. However, they wrongly thought it was Turks they could see looming up: our noble Franks promptly put on their hauberks and strapped their swords to their left sides. They covered the next league forward in full armour before realising that their dreams had come true.

²¹⁵ ‘Publicans’ or Paulicians were, strictly speaking, Manichaean heretics, but the *Antioche* seems to use the term for a people from Africa or Arabia: compare *GF*, p. 20; *AA*, pp. 456–7.

²¹⁶ At this point *AA* has the story of Godfrey killing a bear; it would have sat well in the *Antioche* (pp. 142–5). See Introduction, chapter 1.

²¹⁷ The valley of Boutentrot is the ‘Cilician gates’ in Cappadocia (modern Turkey).

²¹⁸ In the *Antioche* Baldwin and Tancred’s ‘Cilician adventure’ is told in more detail than most sources, mirroring *AA*’s very circumstantial account (pp. 144–81). The (probably) independent account of Ralph of Caen is less reliable (*RC*, pp. 56–73).

Baldwin was delighted to find the Franks, and they humbly exchanged the kiss of peace. The six counts mounted and rode off to inspect the encampment to find a place for Baldwin to pitch his tent. The Turks were horrified to see all this. 'We have walked right into a trap,' they said to each other. 'Soliman has brought his entire household into danger by leaving us here and taking away his men. If the Franks manage to overcome us, the worse for us, having been seduced [into this position], for we shall be completely ill prepared.'

107

Now let us see how things were going with Baldwin.²¹⁹ His provisions had run out and he was unable to buy bread, wine or meat, capons or partridges. He was at his wits' end. So he summoned his messengers and sent them straight to Tancred of Apulia begging him for supplies in the name of Our Lord who was hanged on the Cross, because famine was staring him in the face. Tancred replied, 'Of course: I shall share everything I have with him.' Baldwin took new heart when he saw this, and offered fervent thanks to God in Heaven. He was amply supplied with provisions [by Tancred], but took care to divide them equally between his brave knights, keeping not even tuppenceworth for himself and sitting down to eat with them all.²²⁰ At this point a messenger arrived, spurring towards the city. He raced up to Baldwin and embraced his knees. 'Baldwin, my beloved lord and noble knight, your troubles are over. You can be sure that the whole country lies open and defenceless before you. The Turks (God's curse on them!) are packing up to leave. They are too scared to wait and face our razor-sharp swords: Soliman has totally demoralised them and they are leaving in droves.'

108

And indeed the Turks were streaming out of the noble city. They loaded up their pack animals with bread, wine and corn. Well, they loaded plenty, but actually they managed to take only a few with them because the Franks were itching to get their hands on them and seized them, leaving the Turks bereft and abject. Tancred came spurring up to the fortifications and planted his silken banner on the wall. The native inhabitants were heartbroken to see the banner firmly placed on the wall. Baldwin for his part was not at all pleased, and that led him to do something really reprehensible: he had Tancred's banner flung down and his own gold-fringed one put up instead. Tancred nearly burst a blood vessel when he saw this. He gave orders for his horns to be sounded and all his men to arm. With their support he

²¹⁹ This part of the text is closest to AA's account, but far from identical.

²²⁰ Edifying behaviour for a leader.

would have attacked Baldwin; however, his men dissuaded him. They turned and left, riding non-stop until they reached Mamistra.

109

So the Franks (may Jesus bless them) turned and rode in a column to Mamistra.²²¹ The governor of the town heard their voices and came up onto the walls (may God curse him!). When Bohemond saw him he shouted at the top of his voice: 'Open the doors in the name of the Virgin Mary, my friend, so that I and my nobles can ride in. Any hesitation on your part and the penalty will be death.' The Turk responded: 'By my long beard, the only way you will ever come in here is by force!' Bohemond, somewhat irritated to hear this defiance, said to his men: 'My noble knights, put on your hauberks ready for an attack, in the name of the Lord who rules all.'

110

Bohemond of Sicily armed himself. The doors were opened and they crossed the bridge, our Franks sitting in full armour on their horses. As soon as the Turks were equipped and ready, they all entered the town in a single body. Now Franks and Turks are head to head in the city, striking each other with sharp swords. The Turks made good use of their horn bows, and showered them with Turkish arrows. Indeed the Christians were within an inch of being forced out of the city when Tancred of Apulia happened on the governor of the town and chopped his head off, sending it flying ten feet from the body.²²² At this our Frankish soldiers launched a concerted attack, and pressed the Turks so hard that they forced them out of another gate at swordpoint. The Turks fled, angry and upset, leaving the French safe in possession of the city. By God, they found some good lodgings, and as much bread, wine and meat as they could eat! The town was well situated and they found ample supplies: it was a good place for our Franks to stay.

Meanwhile Baldwin had had a good rest at Tarsus and decided to go and have a look for Tancred, loading his pack animals with bread and corn. Let me bring you up to date with where Tancred had got to. He had ridden non-stop to Choros, to the horror of the Turks. They muttered to each other, 'This is bad news. If once he prevails we are all dead men.' Tancred and his noble lords attacked. The assault lasted for a whole day and ended in Soliman's defeat and flight; they assembled

²²¹ The narrative is confused here: Bohemond was not part of this expedition, and according to both AA (pp. 160–65) and RC (p. 66) Mamistra was the scene of fighting between Baldwin and Tancred. Ms D adds a line saying they found Bohemond.

²²² Literally a fleece and a half. A fleece is about six feet. Tancred's killing of the governor is not in any other text.

finally at Artah. Baldwin rode up to the fortifications and they found a good place to camp in a small wood next to the fields. Richard of the Principate saw this and called out to Tancred. 'Look, there is Baldwin who bears you a totally unjustified grudge. Call your nobles and your household and let's attack him like brave warriors.'

'That is good advice, my friend, and I shall take it.' Tancred had a horn sounded and his men armed themselves. Baldwin was perturbed to see this. He sent a messenger to Tancred to ask him in God's name to show pity and Christian charity and not attack him: he would really appreciate it. Tancred's response was, 'No chance!' and he chased the messengers all the way back to the tents. When he saw this Baldwin sounded a horn and his brave barons all ran to get their weapons. Baldwin rode out in front wearing his hauberk. He swung his lance, gave his horse its head, and struck a knight on his bordered shield with his stout sharp spear, knocking him flying. When Tancred's men saw him in combat they knew for sure that this was not what he had had in mind.²²³ They turned tail in a tightly packed bunch and Baldwin pursued them all the way to the ditch, where 14 knights were unhorsed. Then he drew his gold-hilted sword and made towards the knights, overpowering them, splitting them up and scattering them to the four quarters. Then he sheathed his sword and turned back, commending the noble knights to God. Tancred's companions told him exactly what they thought: 'By our faith, my lord, that was a bad move on your part. Some devil must have bewitched you into doing it, because the result is 14 knights brought down.' Even Bohemond was less than impressed. 'In faith, nephew, I have to say you overreacted. If the duke's brother had decided to pick a quarrel with me, I would not have paid it a moment's attention. I suggest you send a messenger to Baldwin to make peace.'

'My lord,' said the duke [Tancred], 'I shall do as you wish.' So he took 400 knights with him, who beseeched Baldwin so effectively that they [managed to] bring him along. Tancred humbled himself before him, begging for mercy barefoot and clad in a shirt.²²⁴ The two exchanged the kiss of peace and made up. At that point a messenger arrived in a great hurry. The Old Man of the Mountain was begging Baldwin to come and marry his daughter and take charge of his kingdom to help protect the Christian faith.²²⁵ Baldwin was overjoyed at the prospect. He

²²³ Ms C here inserts a unique passage showing the Turks intervening in the dispute to their own advantage.

²²⁴ This was a standard way of showing remorse: cf. Henry II doing penance for the murder of Thomas Becket 'nuz piez e en langes, pur sa char chastier' ('barefoot and in his underclothes to mortify his flesh'), in Guernes de Pont-Saint-Maxence, *La vie de St Thomas Becket*, ed. E. Walberg (Paris, 1936), vv. 1190–91.

²²⁵ The 'Old Man of the Mountains' was a name later given to the leader of the Ismaili sect (the Assassins) in northern Syria: see C. E. Nowell, 'The Old Man of the Mountains', *S*, 22 (1947), pp. 497–519. Here the name is given to the ruler of Edessa, a Greek Christian but a Turkish puppet, Thoros. The *Antioche* carefully passes over the murky details of how Baldwin married the daughter and deposed the father: Asbridge, *First Crusade*, pp. 150–52.

had his horns sounded and ordered his men to mount: he made straight for Edessa and the match ordained by God.

111

Now I shall leave Baldwin to one side and tell you about Tancred. The noble lord was in a luxurious billet at Choros. This was where the Franks assembled. When Godfrey the noble duke of Bouillon arrived, he found Tarsus already conquered and its keep held by Lord William, a very noble man who had married Bohemond's sister.²²⁶ He rode out to meet the duke. Godfrey addressed him as follows: 'How are things with you, noble baron's son?'

'Very good indeed,' replied William. 'Thanks to God we have conquered both Tarsus and Mamistra. Bohemond is at Choros with his companions.' On hearing this Godfrey raised his hands to heaven and thanked Almighty God who suffered for us.

112

So they rode straight up to the city. As for the powerful knights that William had brought with him, Godfrey left 100 behind to guard the fortifications. Meanwhile Duke Godfrey and his entourage went on to the city Tancred was occupying and were well received by him. However they stayed only for a short time before leaving, riding together past hills and castles. At this point Godfrey looked around him and said to his men: 'Hear what I have to say, gentlemen! Where is my brother Baldwin? I want to see him.'

'My lord, he is not here. He has gone to Edessa at the request of the Old Man of the Mountain to marry his daughter and inherit his kingdom.'

'God be praised!' replied Godfrey. 'He will be able to bolster and defend our holy faith.'

113

Meanwhile Baldwin was under way with a large troop of soldiers. They made their way swiftly to Ravenel, mounted a heavy assault and took it. Inside they

²²⁶ William of Grandmesnil was married to Robert Guiscard's daughter Mabel. He had taken refuge at the Byzantine court following an unsuccessful rebellion in Apulia and was on bad terms with his brother-in-law Bohemond. However, according to AA it was not this William but William fitz Marquis, Tancred's brother, who was involved in events at this point (pp. 130–31). It is not clear why Godfrey is suddenly involved or why this William is suddenly in charge of the town: the text appears to have been clumsily summarised.

found 7000 Persian infidels, whom they slaughtered and put to death. Baldwin did not hang around but pressed on without stopping to Edessa. The local clerics came out in procession to meet him with great pomp and ceremony. Would you like to hear about the local Greek customs?²²⁷ When a girl is married there, her bridegroom is dressed in her chemise so that she can be sure of keeping his heart. The ruler of the city boasted a proud ancestry while Baldwin was a very noble and skilful knight. The ruler handed over his daughter and a very sizeable dowry. The money Baldwin acquired then was to stand him in good stead later on: he was an extremely shrewd man not given to frivolity, and he husbanded carefully the wealth he had gained. It was to keep him alive at the siege of Antioch later.²²⁸ He picked out some of the knights of Rum and dispatched them to the fortified city of Artah. When the Turks saw that they had seized the ground, they ran to the towers to mount a defence. The city was full of Greeks and Armenians whom the Turks decapitated, may God curse them! Soliman's two sons leapt from such a height that they hurtled to the ground: it was no laughing matter. Their necks were broken and their souls left their bodies.²²⁹ The inhabitants opened the gates of the city and welcomed the Franks in. May God the Son of the Virgin ride with them!

114

So now our Frankish soldiers were inside Artah, and had raised their banners on the highest towers. More Turks soon appeared and surrounded the city, attacking it vigorously. Those inside defended it bravely and inflicted a lot of damage on the Turkish forces. Soliman of Nicaea asked where his sons were. 'In the name of Mohammed,' replied a Turk, 'I won't beat about the bush. The Franks made your sons leap from the tower into the ditch outside.' On hearing this, Soliman was beside himself. 'My lord Mohammed, you have utterly abandoned me!' he cried. 'For a long time I have seen that you detested me.' In his anger he launched a fresh assault on the city, and the Franks stoutly resisted. About 100 rode out in a tight column, and the first the Saracens and Slavs knew of it was when they heard the French battlecry of 'Montjoie!' Martyrdom beckoned for them. Soliman of Nicaea swung his horse round and struck Gosson on his golden shield, slicing his lance blade into his ribs and knocking him from the horse with the force of his thrust; he

²²⁷ The Edessans were Armenians rather than Greeks, though they had been ruled from Constantinople before Edessa's conquest by the Turks. The bizarre marriage custom is a garbled version of what did take place as part of Thoros' ceremonial adoption of Baldwin as his son: AA, pp. 170–71.

²²⁸ Baldwin did not participate in the siege of Antioch. However, he did help provision the besieging armies there.

²²⁹ More of Soliman's large and shifting family.

cut off his head with his steel sword.²³⁰ [The French turned and fled at the sight, and if they had not all managed to make it back into the tower they would have been overcome and killed to a man. Soliman swore by Mohammed his overlord that he would not retreat until he had cut off all their heads. But now the flower of the Christian army arrived in the form of Godfrey of Bouillon and the other nobles. At this the pagans turned and fled, and Soliman realised that they had been completely defeated.]²³¹ He put his shield in front of him and prepared to flee; all the pagan cowards followed behind him and they rode all the way to the Iron Bridge without stopping.²³² Meanwhile the French turned back to mourn the death of the noble youth Gosson, whose body they retrieved.

115

The proud lords were in the city. Gosson's father came hurrying up to them seeking news of his son. They told him the worst. Imagine the scene: the father on his knees, kissing his dead son on front and back, embracing him and bent over him. 'Ah Gosson my son, you have left me to grieve for you. I am on my way to the Holy Sepulchre: you will never set foot there. What can I do but feel grief and anger when the story of my son's life is ended in this way!'

'My lord,' said Lambert, 'in God's name moderate your grief.'²³³ Alas, my brother Lord Gosson, you have left us behind, and left your father grieving for you and reproaching himself for your death!' His grief was so profound and dignified that 1000 knights wept, paying their respects to their friend.

²³⁰ Gozelo of Montaignu. A clumsy join; he has not previously been referred to. According to AA he died of illness rather than in battle (pp. 186–7).

²³¹ In a slightly odd editorial decision, Duparc-Quioc here adopts the reading of ms C, on the grounds that it is closer to AA. The equivalent passage in ms A reads: 'When the French saw this they were in anguish. They yelled furiously at the pagans and pushed them from pillar to post, killing 4700 of them. When Soliman saw what they were doing, his heart nearly broke in two.'

²³² The 'pont de Fer' or 'Iron Bridge' (north of Antioch) is a mistranslation of 'pons ferreus' or bridge on the river Far (the Orontes). The mistake was made early (see *GF*, p. 28), and corrected by William of Tyre [WT]: trans. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey, *A History of Deeds done beyond the Sea* (2 vols, New York, 1943), vol. 1, p. 198. The description of the bridge, below, resembles AA's, although Albert does not call it the Iron Bridge: he says it was indestructible by iron (pp. 190–93).

²³³ Lambert is Gozelo's (Gosson's) brother.

116

The bishop of Le Puy said, 'Why are you all so upset? Stop grieving and start rejoicing; pray to Almighty God, King of Kings. The body may be dead but the soul gains salvation. I beseech you now to get yourselves organised in God's name. Tomorrow we shall reach the bridge where a difficult time awaits you, and you will find no rest until you are inside Antioch.' So they followed the bishop's advice and ceased to grieve. That night they lodged in the city, burnishing their helmets and scouring their hauberks. They rose at crack of dawn and congregated to hear Matins and the Mass. Then they loaded up their pack animals with bread and corn and marched out of the town in tight formation. They thought about their journey and got under way, leaving the fortress to the Greeks and Armenians. They made straight for the Iron Bridge and pitched their tents on the riverbank. They were not sure where to look for fords and could see no bridge or boat; so they prayed to Almighty God, King of Kings in his eternal goodness to show them the way.

117

The army (God's blessing on them!) rode on enthusiastically and without stopping to the Iron Bridge. There they found a swift-flowing river with a large fleet on it. The bridge itself was arched, elaborately designed and with two towers at each end, all well equipped. Soliman of Syria had posted his guards in them and used them as prisons for the many captives he had taken on Peter the Hermit's Byzantine adventure, God curse him! They were shut up in prison suffering a miserable existence. Men and women alike were shouting out: 'Lord God, Holy Sepulchre, come to our aid!' The bishop of Le Puy heard their voices and instantly alerted the Franks.

118

The bishop of Le Puy said: 'My noble lords and knights, this is what God our Father said when he redeemed the world. His Son would be avenged by those who were to come after. The sermon was preached at Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne.²³⁴ Angevins and Bretons swore to make the journey; and a full 20,000 men from our region swore by its saints to do likewise to avenge God or die in the attempt. So let us pray to Him who suffered for us to show us a ford where we can get across.' They bent down to the ground, sinking to their knees. Now listen to the amazing thing Jesus (in whom we must believe) did to confound Mohammed.

²³⁴ Unlike in the prologue to the poem, the Crusade is ascribed to Urban: there is no mention of Peter the Hermit.

119

Listen to this if you are men who believe in God and you will hear about the miracle wrought by God the Redeemer.²³⁵ One day Enguerrand of St-Pol got up; he fastened his mailed hauberk on his back and tied his green-sheened helmet onto his head; he hung his good sharp sword at his left side and a good heavy shield around his neck; he grasped a stout sharp spear and mounted his spirited warhorse. He made his way out of the camp alone at a gentle pace and rode along next to the rushing water of the fords. As he looked downstream from a slope, he saw a Persian knight making his way across the river, on his way to spy on the Christian warriors. Enguerrand's heart beat faster at the sight and he spurred in hot pursuit, following close on the Persian's trail. When he got to the riverbank he dismounted and turned to face eastwards to pray with raised hands, begging God the Omnipotent King of Heaven to show him the way across the river. Then he remounted, shouting a challenge to the pagans, and made his way across the ford. On the other side he found large numbers of pagans: listen to what he did next. He drew his sword with its burnished gold hilt and, galloping towards the bridge, sliced through the iron chain [holding it] so that it dropped down. He called at the top of his voice: 'I command you to arms in God's name, my lords!' He proceeded to guard the bridge from both directions to ensure that there was no surprise attack from the cowardly pagans. Hugh of St-Pol heard him immediately and shouted loudly: 'Come on, my lords! I am sure Enguerrand is over there on the other side!' The Franks were delighted at the news. You can imagine that more than one seasoned warrior wept tears of joy, imploring God to let them live long enough to take the bridge. Now hear how God replied to their prayers with an amazing miracle for our Franks. Lord Hugh of St-Pol crossed in front and the rest of the Franks spurred on behind him.²³⁶ They all swept across the bridge whether or not people liked it, and the first the Publicans knew of it was when our men charged as one. Now the Turks will be put out to grass!²³⁷

120

As soon as the Franks had crossed the bridge and saw the Turks before them in the meadow, Enguerrand of St-Pol was the first to speak: 'My lords and noble knights, give me your attention. We have reached Antioch after a long and painful journey. We are never going to have enough bread, wine or corn unless we take

²³⁵ Taking command of this bridge on the approach to Antioch was the essential first step to taking the city. This skirmish seems to be a transplanted version of an episode in which the St-Pols were prominent, reported by AA, pp. 212–17.

²³⁶ Although it is not obvious quite what the miracle is.

²³⁷ The meaning is not clear: it seems to be that the Turks will be completely swept aside: literally, 'Now the Turks will go out grazing on the meadow.'

it at swordpoint. We have endured endless hunger and thirst. By God, my lords, let's make sure we get rewarded for it. If we die here we shall all find salvation: we shall enter God's presence and avoid all risk of damnation. The Turks are in front of us offering battle, and in their arrogance do not fear us one bit. But if we could get between them and the city, with half of us blocking off the fortifications, we could distinguish ourselves by taking a prize well worth having. Have you seen how many provisions the Turks have brought with them? If we could get our hands on all that meat we would not go short at the siege of Antioch: there would be absolutely no risk of us running out of food.' Our Franks acted on his words. Count Robert and all his followers made for the main body of the Turks to launch an attack, taking Lord Hugh of St-Pol with him. He caught the wicked Turks unawares, the Franks ploughing into the middle of them with Count Robert yelling, 'Montjoie!' Our Christians slaughtered Saracens left, right and centre, raining blows on them with their steel swords until their arms dripped with blood up to their elbows. When the Turks realised the full gravity of their situation, they made for Antioch. But they found Enguerrand of St-Pol, Bernard of Domeart and his father Walter blocking the way. The Franks pushed them on at swordpoint towards the squadron awaiting them, who did not hang back. Enguerrand of St-Pol rode to attack Aceré, plunging his sword into his ear and wounding one of Garsion's sons mortally. When the Saracens and Slavs saw him fall their only thought was to flee – if they could find an escape route. However, they had gone hardly any distance when they came upon Bohemond and his cousin Tancred, Godfrey of Bouillon and the renowned Roger.²³⁸ They smashed into the Saracens and knocked them flying, leaving the battlefield strewn with the fallen. The pagans and Slavs turned tail and made for the river Orontes, where 4000 of them drowned. The remnants retreated in total disorder and went to find Garsion in the governor's palace. As soon as they caught sight of him they shouted: 'King Garsion, your kingdom is lost. The Franks have crossed the bridge on the Orontes and killed more of us than you can count.' Garsion was appalled. He asked them, 'What on earth has happened to leave you in such a state? Have you restored Soliman to his kingdom?' Soliman was angered at this comment. He replied tartly to Garsion, 'You're a fine one to criticise me. When are you going to seek vengeance for the death of your eldest son at the hands of the Franks?' At these words Garsion looked down the steps which led up to the palace and saw his son's body being carried towards them: unsurprisingly he was griefstricken.

121

Garsion of Antioch was broken-hearted at the loss of his son. Nobody – Malades or Wittans, Sortins or Tonicles or his brother Cartans – could console him. 'I

²³⁸ Roger of Barneville and Roger of Rozoy were both prominent on the Crusade. This could be either.

did tell you so, my lord,' said Soliman. 'This is not the last time you will suffer from Frankish arrogance. Nicaea, my strong and noble city, is lost; so are Tarsus, Mamistra and great Artah; any Saracens and Persians left inside would be cut to pieces by the sharp spears of the Franks, with Mohammed and Tervagant powerless to help. The Frankish lords are on their way to besiege you – and once they swear to set up a siege they will stay as long as it takes; not the sultan nor your brother Bialies nor your nephew Corbaran would be enough to make them turn tail.'²³⁹ Garsion was plunged into gloom by this and 100,000 bezants would not have got a word out of him.

122

Garsion of Antioch was heartbroken at the fate of his son; they buried him the same day with full pagan ritual.²⁴⁰ Meanwhile the Franks got on with splitting the booty between them. The Turks in the two towers had not forgotten about them. When the calm of night had descended they made a sortie, expecting to find the Franks cut to pieces and demoralised. But their leader had made a serious mistake: there were no Persians or Arabs left in the towers, so that only 900 actually came out to fight. They crept silently in amongst the Frankish soldiers. But listen to how God favoured the Franks! Enguerrand of St-Pol and the brave Thomas [of La Fère] were keeping guard that night along with 300 armoured men. They heard not a sound of horse or palfrey until the Turkish attack was launched in their midst. 'That was a bad decision!' said Butors and Clares. 'We have stumbled up against Thomas and Enguerrand, and the Frankish lords have dishonoured us all.' The attack came from the right at the head of the column. Butors dug in his spurs, carrying his dark-coloured shield and made for Ouedon; he struck him full in the face and knocked him dead into the scrub. Meanwhile his brother Clares killed our man Alis from Veurne in Flanders.

123

Thomas of La Fère said: 'My noble lords, the Saracens and Persians are pressing us hard. I for one would much rather die than see them go away boasting of victory. Let's go and smash their heads in.' And that is exactly what the experienced Christians did. Their steeds carried them to the Iron Bridge, where they killed 140 infidels; then the valiant warriors swept back to the towers abandoned by the tyrant. There they found imprisoned the German captives from Peter's band who

²³⁹ We do not hear elsewhere of this brother, or of Corbaran as Garsion's nephew.

²⁴⁰ The loss of Garsion's son is emphasised by use of *laisses enchaînées*: this marks out the importance of the first skirmish at Antioch.

had been taken at Nicaea, in floods of tears: they untied and liberated them.²⁴¹ Then they made their way back to the main army rejoicing and very pleased with themselves. Godfrey offered praise to Almighty God when he saw them. Meanwhile the 40 Turks turned tail and fled;²⁴² the news was reported to an already miserable Garsion in the city.

124

Now our Franks were encamped on the far side of the bridge. The bishop of Le Puy addressed them. 'My lords and noble Frankish knights, listen to what I have to say. Over there you can see Antioch. I am very concerned about Garsion, given how scattered we are over these fields. Who will stand guard? Someone needs to, my lords, or the wicked Saracens will be on us.'

'I shall do it, Your Reverence,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'I need no company other than my trusty warhorse. At daybreak tomorrow we shall be renewing our acquaintance with the Persians and Slavs.'

'God's blessing on you,' replied the Franks. So that night the noble Godfrey was on guard duty. Meanwhile Soliman and all his companions saddled up and stole into the middle of the army. The good duke sensed his presence immediately. He called for his squire by name: 'Bring me my hauberk and my round helmet, then come and find me all alone in front of this tent.'

'Your orders will be carried out,' replied the squire. The lion-hearted duke put on his hauberk and buckled his sword on his left thigh, slung his shield round his neck, shouldered his pennant and leapt onto his Gascon warhorse from the left stirrup. Now off he rides – God come to his aid! And look – who should come spurring through the Christian army at high speed but St George and St Demetrius!²⁴³ The duke had no idea who they were and did not talk to them. The three companions wheeled round in unison. The Saracens knew exactly who the divine reinforcements were. They turned tail and fled, lowering their pennants, and the duke followed hard on their heels at top speed. In this way he caught up with 14 of them, who stood no chance of escape: he chopped their heads off at the chin. The others, demoralised, slunk away. Yet none of the French nor Bretons knew anything of this until they rose early the following morning and found pagan heads scattered across the sand. Then they praised God who suffered for us.

²⁴¹ This seems to be based on AA, a scene that actually took place immediately after the capture of Nicaea (pp. 126–7). There is no reference here to the 'chétifs' themselves, miles away in Oliberene.

²⁴² It is not clear who these 40 Turks are, although they recur later at *laisses* 205–6 when Soliman arrives at the court of the sultan of Persia. The *Canso*, vv. 283 and 291, has 44 kings.

²⁴³ The saints' third appearance in the poem.

125

When the following day dawned our Franks were all ready and waiting. Let me tell you how the Turks were getting on. They sought out Garsion and harangued him as follows: 'By Mohammed, my lord, you have demonstrated your incompetence and no mistake! Butors and Clares acted stupidly; all your Turks have been expelled from your two towers on the river Orontes and the Franks have stormed them with powerful troops, releasing all your captives.' Garsion nearly went berserk on hearing this. He fainted four times out of sheer rage and frustration, then raved once he recovered. He had Lord Soliman of Nicaea summoned. 'Go and stock my towers with provisions immediately. I want them full of wine and corn within eight days.'

'Your wish is my command,' replied Soliman. He promptly made for Antioch to buy provisions, stocking the towers with abundant bread and wine and meat. The Franks stayed where they were, encamped on the field. Count Rotrou of La Perche was the first to speak. 'My lords,' he said, 'I have to say that we suffer a great deal at the hands of these pagans, curse them.'

'It won't be for much longer,' said the duke of Bouillon. 'When vespers ring out tomorrow we shall attack the city.'

126

The leaders came out of their tents. The first to speak were the valiant Bohe-mond, Tancred of Apulia and Robert the Frisian. 'Gentlemen,' they said, 'we need to discuss how we go about laying siege to Antioch. As the leaders of the army we should be at the head of the attack force. We should have the following with us: Lord Hugh of St-Pol and Enguerrand; Thomas of la Fère and Haton his companion. The duke of Normandy, who has already been summoned; Otto the duke of Brittany; the lion-hearted Thierry of Blansdras and Gilbert of Reims, with the Burgundians, should constitute the rear-guard. Herbert the duke of the Basque country, Godeschalk and Simon, Rainald of Nivelles with his pennant laced on, Roger the Emperor and Anselm of Ribemont will go round the other side to guard the flank of the army. Meanwhile Lord Hugh of Vermandois, brother of King Philip of France, the noble Pagan of Garland and the count of Clermont will fight alongside the noble duke of Bouillon.'

'Your orders are understood,' was the reply. They loaded up mules and pack animals with bread and supplies, and rode out unobtrusively in a long line. Their destination: to besiege Antioch come what might. Picture Garsion in his citadel with Soliman of Nicaea and his nephew Rubion. Soliman was gazing out across the sandy heath when he glimpsed a flag and the glitter of steel. He fainted four times in succession, unable to help himself. When the evil Saracens had picked him up and dusted him down, Garsion asked him: 'What in Mohammed's name is the matter with you?'

'You are a dead man and your doom beckons,' replied Soliman. 'Your city and lands are already lost.' The king frowned at this. He had horns sounded all the way round the keep, filling Antioch with a din which could be heard a league and a half away. The Slavs prepared Turkish catapults, swearing by Mohammed that no Christian would enter the city or take it by force.

127

So the brave knights rode on in full force, not stopping until they reached Antioch. Now let me explain how the Franks set up the siege.²⁴⁴ The first gate, where the walls rose forward and up on each side, was where Tancred son of the Emir set up camp.²⁴⁵ With him were the pugnacious Roger, and Roger of Rozoy who had a slight limp.²⁴⁶ No food or other help would make it past them: Roger's sharp sword would make sure of that. Tancred's tent was tall and extensive; however, one of those bastard pagans placed a tower looming over it and set up his Turkish catapults, swearing by Mohammed whom he worshipped that he would kill Tancred of Apulia. No good would come of his setting up his tent so close.

128

Bohemond set up camp at the next gate where the wall extended, erecting his tent in front of the tower held by Afaine. The Saracen had 4000 Azoparts under him. He swore in Mohammed's name that, as long as he lived and to the best of his ability, no Frank would enter Antioch. Bohemond for his part proclaimed that he would not give an inch: the Saracens were greedy cowards who would starve until he took the city.

129

Lord Robert the Frisian set up camp at another postern gate opposite Capharnaon, overlooked by the Josian Tower at the foot of the mountain, in company with Enguerrand of St-Pol and his father Hugh. Overlooking him were Josuaus and Clarion with 4000 vicious Turks. They muttered to each other, 'Gentlemen, we

²⁴⁴ The positions of the leaders correspond only loosely with AA, pp. 198–201. However, he is the only chronicler to describe in detail the setting up of the siege. It is notable that *laissez* 127–39 are short *laissez similaires*. Verses 2866–3029 are not in ms A and Duparc-Quioc uses the reading of ms B.

²⁴⁵ A misreading of 'son of the Marquis'?

²⁴⁶ Probably the first is Roger of Barneville: AA, pp. 198–9. Roger of Rozoy is routinely described as limping, 'qui cloche del talon', for the sake of the rhyme.

need to look out for ourselves. Count Robert of Flanders has put up his tent, and we are dead men if we go near him.'

130

The noble duke of Brittany put up his tent at the foot of the mountain in the shadow of the Fauseré Tower; with him were the brave-hearted Herbert, duke of the Basques, Godeschalk his brother and the valiant Simon. Neither bread nor wine nor corn would get past them; nor would any Turk without suffering serious injury. Those up in the tower proclaimed that no Frank would get into the city without paying dearly for the privilege.

131

All the Normans and Bretons along with the barons of Anjou and Maine were in front of the main tower at the foot of the mountain. The count of Normandy set up his tent there on level ground. No goods or merchandise would get past them, nor any Turk on the lookout for a sale.

132

The bishop of Le Puy set up camp over towards the bridge over the river Orontes, on the Byzantine side of the city. Lord Raymond of St-Gilles set up next to him. The Occitans and Gascons were camped around them, with 1000 of the bravest at their head. Up above them in the tower was Carcans of Syria. He swore by Tervagant (God curse him!) that no Frank would get into the city without losing his life in the process. Count Raymond announced his intention to launch an attack: may God the Son of the Virgin be with him!

133

Further down, the lion-hearted Taticius, the count of Nevers and the nobly born count of Baudas set up camp on a sandy bit of ground.²⁴⁷ They proclaimed loudly their intention that no bread or supplies would make it past them into the city as long as they were alive, and no Turk would make it in without our men all seeing them

²⁴⁷ Taticius is shown setting up camp on the same footing as the leaders of the Crusade; this contrasts sharply with his treatment in other sources such as *GF*, pp. 34–5, and *RM*, pp. 128–9, where he is vilified as a sneak for the Emperor.

134

Oliver of Jussi set up camp at another postern gate in the southern part of the walls; with him were Count Rotrou of La Perche, Ralph of Beaugency, Richard of Verdun, Raimbald of Coumarci and Achard of Montmerle renowned for his bravery. They swore by the God of faith that they would reduce Garsion to a state of utter rage and dismay. Grogelans looked down on them from the tall Gai tower and lambasted them in the name of his friend Mohammed: 'Aha, you pathetic Franks – why on earth did you bother coming this far? Every last one of you will be killed, overthrown and routed.'

135

In the direction of Jerusalem near the Bernaus Gate and the fast-flowing waters of the river Orontes, a lord who was indeed noble pitched his tent – the tall and handsome duke of Bouillon. When in due course he became the king and emperor of Jerusalem, he did not wear a crown of beaten gold or other metal. Instead he had a circlet made for him from the garden of Saint Abraham; and the good King of the Tafurs, because he had been the first to climb in over the walls, placed it on his head.²⁴⁸ The duke's tent was made of silk and was high and spacious; near it were many others coloured blue, green and crimson. The Emir Bernaus looked down on them from his tower and cursed them in the name of Mohammed, bringer of cold and heat. 'Aha, you Franks,' he said, 'you are so treacherous and malignant. Look at you now, positively looking for shame and suffering. I shall see every last one of you destroyed and slaughtered by my archers. Not one of you will escape, bald or hairy.'

136

Count Robert of Flanders set up camp in a water-meadow at the Fabur Gate that looked towards Byzantium. He had 10,000 knights with him. Numerous tents could be seen pitched everywhere, marquees and pavilions all glowing in the torchlight. Count Robert swore by the Virgin that, if the pagans made a sortie to attack the army, he would fight them off with his razor-sharp sword until his fists were blackened with dried blood. Faburs looked down on them from his tall and ancient tower, and cursed them all in the name of Mohammed his god. 'Aha, you pathetic lot,' he said, 'the curse of Apollo on you! You may have set up an

²⁴⁸ This provides a link to the *Jérusalem*, where – because he refuses to wear a crown of gold – the Tafur king crowns Godfrey with a crown of leaves (representing the Crown of Thorns) from the garden of St Abraham (vv. 5318–20). See Péron, pp. 249–50, for the significance of pilgrims picking palm fronds from the garden of St Abraham.

impregnable siege round Antioch, but you will not be getting any supplies by land or by sea. You may have pressed us hard back towards the fleet but you might as well not have bothered: your efforts are worth nothing. Antioch is immensely strong and you will never take it.'

137

Count Hugh and his Franks went to another postern gate held by the tyrannical Brunamont, near the tower where the Sleepers lie to set up their camp;²⁴⁹ there were 10,000 warriors all brave and spoiling for a fight. Large numbers of tents could be seen, indigo and crimson and ornamented with gold. Brunamons looked down on them from the top of his lofty tower and cursed them in the name of his god Tervagant. 'Aha, you pathetic miserable wretches,' he said, 'going headlong to doom and death! Every last one of you will end up being handed over to the emir sultan and he will use you to repopulate his deserts of Abilant.'

138

The upper gate facing towards the mountain beneath the tower held by Principle, brother of Gonderont, was where the Tafur king and his followers set up camp. They swore by God who created the world that if they could get their hands on the pagans they would gobble them up.²⁵⁰ The Tafurs yelled, shouted and kicked up a great din. Principle looked down on them and frowned angrily, cursing them and everything about them in the name of Mohammed. 'By Apollo, where does this ragtag mob spring from and where does it think it's going? None of them has any clothes or weapons, but what they do have is bravery in abundance to set up so near the bridge. I think they must be devils incarnate, here to take the city.'

²⁴⁹ The legend of the Seven Sleepers (young Christians who fell asleep in c. 250 during a period of Roman persecution and woke two centuries later after it was all over) is more usually associated with Ephesus. However, at some point confusion arose between the Sleepers and seven Jewish martyrs of Antioch. The original Seven Sleepers were revered by both Christians and Muslims. See the account in *Jacobus de Voragine: the Golden Legend*, trans. C. Stace (London, 1998), pp. 178–82; E. Dermenghem et al., 'Les Sept Dormants d'Ephèse en Islam et en Chrétienté (Recueil documentaire et iconographique)', *Revue des études islamiques*, 29 (Paris, 1955), pp. 59–112.

²⁵⁰ Literally. This is the first reference to the cannibalism repeatedly linked with the Tafurs and prefiguring the gruesome description at *laisses* 274–5. See Introduction, chapter 3.

139

The loyal-hearted Thomas of Marle and a large number of his men set up camp on level ground near the river Orontes at the gate guarded by Mahon, brother of the emir. Meanwhile Stephen of Albemarle set up his camp at the other postern gate which was up on a rocky spine, accompanied by 15,000 peerless knights.²⁵¹ Mahon looked down on them from his tall fortified tower. 'Aha, you pathetic Christian unbelievers,' he said, 'look at you rushing headlong to suffering and misery! Every last one of you will be killed and turned over to my archers. You will never take this town. Its walls are far too strong; its doors are of iron and cannot be undermined, and it is equipped with numerous main towers. You are going to die outside our walls of hunger, misery and sheer wretchedness. You are going to get so desperate that you will be eating your packhorses and lots of your steeds.'

140

And that was how our men set up siege all the way round Antioch, each of our leaders guarding an entrance. They had food brought at the double, and smoke rose over the camp in large quantities. It was a beautiful clear day and the heat was already intense. The Saracens and pagans assembled their forces at the Escivant Gate, above the square tower. Garsion called them to attention and addressed them as follows: 'Gentlemen and noble lords, listen to what I have to say. The Christians have devastated large swathes of my territory, as much as a horseman can cover in a full day's ride. They have laid siege to my city, large and extensive as it is. You can hear the noise they make in the evenings. Anyone they capture is promptly beheaded.' The Saracens replied: 'You are absolutely right, noble Emir. We shall guard Antioch to the best of our ability, and the French will regret the day they ever boarded a ship to sail here.'²⁵² They turned and left to prepare their people for battle, every last one of them fully armed. Outside Antioch there is a large meadow. The good warhorse Fabur with the chestnut haunches²⁵³ was grazing on the dew there, guarded by ten Saracens each holding a lethally sharp axe to ensure that such a famous steed did not go missing.²⁵⁴ Our French soldiers eyed him up from the safety of the bank, itching to get their hands on him but nervous about how to cross the river.

²⁵¹ Stephen of Aumale is also mentioned by AA (pp. 98–9); RC mentions men from Albemarle (p. 74).

²⁵² Ms A resumes here.

²⁵³ 'a la crupe tiulee': standard epic formula (T-L, vol. 10, p. 338).

²⁵⁴ This episode, about a Flemish hero, is unique to the *Antioche*. Aire is near Calais.

141

On the other bank of the Orontes was a pleasant meadow full of flowers. That was where ten fully armoured Arabs were guarding the warhorse Fabur for their master. Fabur was an outstanding horse, fast and agile, capable of covering twenty leagues faster than any other horse and without slowing to draw breath. Let me tell you what he was like. One side was black; the other lily-white. His quarters were ample and squarely built; his feet hollowed and arched; his nostrils widely flared; and his eyes a liquid brown. He was the best steed to be found in the whole kingdom of Antioch. A Turk fastened a burnished gold saddle on him, put a richly caparisoned bridle on his head, and added a chest strap of supple leather. He tethered him by the leg to a stout stake; the horse pirouetted, neighed and pawed the ground.

142

The horse did not take kindly to being tethered: it twisted, pirouetted and kicked out in a frenzy of spirited impatience. On the other side of the Orontes the Franks were drooling at the sight, though not one was brave enough to attempt to cross the river. Let me tell you at this point of what Gontier of Aire decided to do: you are unlikely to hear of a braver feat. He was a squire who had not yet been knighted. He galloped forward out of the ranks; lashed his golden spurs to his belt and a sword to his left side; made the sign of the Cross on his forehead and commended himself to God; then went straight to the Orontes and plunged in. An accomplished swimmer, he was soon on the other side and climbing up the bank. In the twinkling of an eye his spurs were fastened to his heels and he was storming across the meadows, sword in hand. Just imagine the hue and cry of the Turks when they saw him! All of them ran towards him, axes at the ready. Gontier did not hesitate for an instant when he saw them coming. He struck the first so hard with his engraved sword that the head flew some nine feet.²⁵⁵ The second had the sword sunk in his head down to the jawbone. The third was slashed right down to the chest. What more can I say? He left five of them dead and the rest running for their lives. Meanwhile he reached the horse, swung himself into the saddle, and spurred the horse to charge full speed like a swift-winged falcon. He caught up with the other five Turks and cut off all their heads. He made a swift detour into Antioch to kill another three, then wheeled round and away. A shout went up from downstream, and 20,000 Esclers came riding into view. The Franks, craning from their tents and lodgings, saw Gontier and called on the Holy Sepulchre at the tops of their voices.

²⁵⁵ Formulaic: compare vv. 2354–5 in *laisse* 110.

143

The Slavs and Persians chased after Gontier. When he reached the Orontes he flung himself in; the horse carried him across swiftly and strongly, and soon he was on the river-beach on the other side. Nobody could conceive of a braver exploit. The princes and nobles crowded round him. Lord Robert the Frisian came spurring up. Gontier looked down modestly. 'Cousin,' said the count, 'you have the heart of a true knight and I shall never complain about your behaviour. If I get back to Flanders safe and sound I shall have no seneschal other than you, or any counsellor in my court even a shade above you. You have gained a better horse than any in this army; let anyone who holds it against you suffer eternal damnation. You have won through like a true champion!'

'Quite right, noble cousin,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'he can be knighted whenever he wants.'

'God's blessing on you, my lords,' said Gontier, 'but let that wait until we reach the Holy Sepulchre.' Each leader made his way back to his tent, and provisions were distributed throughout the army to those in need. Meanwhile the Turks were in a terrible state in Antioch. They went to Garsion's tower to tell him what had transpired. He was furious and told them all to go back to their households and make sure nobody was slipping away and abandoning the city.

144

The Turks in Antioch were extremely upset about the horse. They hastened to sound a great mountain horn and assembled their forces at the Iron Gate. Ten thousand mounted archers rode out to ambush the Christian army. They concealed themselves in an old castle, and that night inflicted a serious blow on our forces. Ten packhorses were coming from the port of St Simeon, heavily loaded with provisions and bread.²⁵⁶ They were under the charge of Raymond and his men. However some were lingering a whole league behind, and the Turks (curse them!) leapt out and attacked. The only soldiers with them were some sergeants on foot. The Turks inflicted bloody wounds with their bows of horn. The sergeants realised that all was lost and made their escape, yelling at the tops of their voices to attract attention: 'Hoy! Lord Raymond, where are you? We desperately need help!' Raymond heard the commotion and lost his temper. 'Get ready to ride,' he said to his companions. 'The Turks have made a sortie to attack our people. If we lose those provisions, we are in deep trouble. Do your best, gentlemen!' All 300

²⁵⁶ The port of St Simeon was some eight miles south-west of Antioch. This episode is not in the chronicles.

spurred forward, but to no avail: they were already too late. The Turks had driven our packhorses to the bridge and the first of them were already crossing it.²⁵⁷

145

The Turks had already led the packhorses onto the bridge. Picture Raymond galloping up at top speed. He and his companions flung themselves on the Turks: they did not use their lances to strike them but instead rained blows on them with their sharp steel swords. The main army heard the shouting and hurried to get into armour for the battle. They came over to the Iron Bridge yelling ‘Montjoie!’ and rescued the packhorses by sheer weight of numbers. The Saracens retreated into the city, slammed the gates shut, and barred the posterns. Our knights made their way back, each returning to his own tent. It was a beautiful clear night and the sky was peppered with stars. Bohemond and Tancred kept watch over the Christian army until dawn broke the following day. All the leaders came together for a council. Their unanimous view was that the siege needed to be set nearer the city because it was too easy for the Saracens to come sweeping out; their orders were carried out immediately. All the leaders had their tents moved, having them set up a crossbow shot away from the walls. All the leaders without exception swore that, no matter what privations they suffered, they would not give up and go away until they had taken Antioch, hard as that was proving to be. They set up a textbook siege of Antioch and its citadel, with an army stretching a league across in each direction. Not that that did much good, because the Turks came and went as they pleased.²⁵⁸

146

Our Franks set up a thorough siege round Antioch. In front of the iron gate known as La Mahomerie was a very ancient bridge built under the rule of the Publicans.²⁵⁹ The arches over the rushing water dated from the time when God handed down the first laws. It was roofed over with solidly built vaults, and so well fortified with towers and battlements that Antioch had no need to fear enemies coming from that quarter. It was an extremely strong bridge, believe you me. The Turks (may the body of God curse them!) crossed it to inflict serious damage on our forces.

²⁵⁷ AA tells of similar raids and sorties, including one involving a force of 300 Christians (pp. 206–7). There is no exact parallel to this episode.

²⁵⁸ The crusaders were unable to close the blockade because of the length of Antioch’s walls and the steep terrain. The citadel, situated on top of the ridge overlooking the city, was a particular difficulty and allowed the Turks to come and go at will. See Asbridge, *First Crusade*, pp. 158–62.

²⁵⁹ La Mahomerie was a mosque inside the gate.

Wherever they happened on them their lives were forfeit: the Turks beheaded them and they stood no chance of escape. Jesus, Son of the Virgin and Judge over all the world, was deeply upset at this and so were the barons who had charged the army. The bishop of Le Puy assembled all the leaders and asked their advice about the pagans who kept on making sorties across the Iron Bridge and inflicting such losses on our people.²⁶⁰ Their unanimous response was to shout: 'Then let's destroy the bridge, in the name of the Virgin!' Rich and poor did not wait to be asked twice: the news spread quickly through the army and all offered thanks to God. They left things for that night, waiting for the following dawn.

147

When dawn broke the following day, sergeants and knights throughout the army got themselves ready. Carrying iron hammers and Turkish-style steel picks, they left their tents in tightly packed ranks. More than 400 horns were sounded. They arrived at the redoubtable river Orontes: they were determined to knock down the bridge, smashing the arches, cutting through the stakes and breaking the joists. But twenty days' work would not have sufficed, so that when they returned to their quarters that evening they had barely enough stones between them to load a single packhorse. However, they had just the right machine for the job. They attached it with nails and pegs and took it on wheels to opposite the bridge. The sergeants, crossbow men, armed infantry and noble archers were there already. A fierce battle with arrows and lances followed, the Turks making strenuous efforts to hold the bridge. They defended themselves fiercely with no concern for their losses, more than 1000 Turks in front of the gate. Picture how many heads were smashed in by stones, how many helmets crushed and shields shattered, how many wicked Saracens were knocked over and sent flying from the bridge to fall into the water and drown. It was a massive battle with considerable slaughter, the catapults flinging stones inside and out. The battle lasted the whole day until the sun set and evening drew on to night.

148

The battle on the Iron Bridge was a large one. Squires, sergeants and the mass of the army struck hard blows, each fighting loyally as hard as he could.²⁶¹ Now picture the proud Wicher spurring up on his proud bay steed. He dismounted on

²⁶⁰ Considerable topographical confusion. The Iron Bridge was not one of the bridges underneath the walls of Antioch.

²⁶¹ Duparc-Quioic cites this line as an example of how the author flags up the role of the common soldiers (*Edition*, p. 180).

the bridge next to a niche and let his horse go, unconcerned about its fate.²⁶² Then he drew his sword with its bright razor-sharp edge. He forged straight through the press of battle without hesitating, holding his shield in front of his visor. At the Iron Gate right in front of the tower he struck the king of Ascalon in the midst of a hundred Saracens. The king's shield was about as useful to him as a piece of cloth, and his helmet and hood offered no more protection than a quail's egg. Wicher slashed right down into his entrails and knocked him dead with no hope of escape. The people of the Devil scattered when they saw such a blow.

149

When the Turks saw the Franks bearing down on them wielding their sharp steel swords, they were well aware that the battle was turning against them. They went back through the gate, bolting it behind them, and went up on top of the high walls to harangue the Christians. The greedy allies of the Devil defended themselves stoutly with excellent quality Turkish bows (may God the judge of all confound them!) and the arrows they had prepared, and dipped the tips of the lances in sulphur.²⁶³ They shot so many into the siege engine that one arrow stuck into the end of another till they looked like applewood lances, so thickly planted that nothing could hide among them. Now let me tell you about the cunning plan devised by the cowardly Saracens. For their next trick they took some redoubtable Greek fire and flung it all in flames into the siege engine. The flames shot up as far as a manual bow could shoot,²⁶⁴ so that the planks and joists were all alight: there was no chance of any sergeant or knight being able to extinguish the flames. Our leaders were furious at the sight.

150

The siege engine was well alight, with a huge column of smoke and the Greek fire spreading flames on all sides. Every rope was completely burnt, every timber and hoarding reduced to charcoal. The flames flew up high towards the mountains further than a cross-bow could shoot. Our barons turned and left without further ado: the siege engine was lost beyond hope of recovery and the bridge to their great annoyance remained intact.²⁶⁵ All the leaders were drawn and pale. The wretched

²⁶² Poetic exaggeration: chargers were expensive and precious.

²⁶³ The Turks are described as 'gloton', a standard terms of abuse: Bancourt, *Muslimans*, vol. 2, p. 74.

²⁶⁴ This is an 'arc manier' as opposed to the more powerful crossbow: France, *Western Warfare*, p. 26. For Greek fire see note to *laisse* 39.

²⁶⁵ The *Antioche* here passes over a large swathe of material from AA, which includes a further exploit by Enguerrand (pp. 212–17).

Saracen bastards came out and followed them, killing and wounding a large number of our men, then retreated and shut the gate behind them. They mounted ceaseless attacks morning, noon and night, killing and injuring our forces.

151

Our leaders realised that they were in a hopeless situation. So they held council in the middle of a field. 'Our army is in a bad position,' was the general opinion. 'We cannot protect ourselves from these abominable Saracens. So what we should do is to build a castle at La Mahomerie in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary. If God, the ruler of all, ordains that we should take the city, the Virgin will be worshipped there: we shall build an abbey and install monks to serve her. It is there that the Turks are getting in and out, God curse them.' The leaders replied: 'We shall commit ourselves to this. Not one of us disagrees with this suggestion: all of us are in favour and happy to support it.' So the horns were sounded very loudly. Our men all armed themselves in the name of Our Lord who rules the whole world, Jesus the Saviour whom we worship and to whom we pray. Everyone went at the task with a will, and there were no shirkers: before long the hubbub of hard work and a great deal of carpentry could be heard. The fort was built on top of a large cistern and is still known as La Mahomerie. The Franks built the walls and constructed the defences with great skill, so that there would no longer be anything to fear from that direction. However, the garrison would need to worry about damage to life and limb. In the courtyard outside the gate of the fortress they found sarcophagi of marble and porphyry. They threw out the bodies of the hated Saracens, the darts and javelins, large numbers of burnished swords, helmets and hoods of glittering gold and the other arms carried by Turks to protect themselves. Some of the weapons they found buried were worth one thousand bezants of Slavonian gold. They found large quantities of gold and Almerian silks, silver, siglaton and Russian fabrics.²⁶⁶ All this they shared out among the poor of the army. When the Saracens found out they assembled their forces and launched an attack on our men in front of the fort. There was a large and fierce skirmish, but the superior Christian tactics carried the day: the pagan forces came off worse and the Turks retreated, unable to take any more. They streamed back through the gates into the ancient city, while our knights returned to their quarters. They took 100 Turks along with them: these were beheaded to a man. Then they exhumed the corpses buried by the Persians. They cut the head off each one below the ears; I am not exaggerating when I tell you there were 1,520 of them. They loaded them into Turkish catapults designed to throw shaped stones and flung them over the top of the smooth stone walls of Antioch: each one splattered open when it landed.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ The treasure is not reported elsewhere and smacks of wishful thinking.

²⁶⁷ Not obvious why the catapults are Turkish: maybe to preserve the metre. This gruesome episode is found in other sources: cf. RM, p. 123. The *Antioche* adds to the horror

The pagans were in uproar at the sight. Father and mothers, wives and girlfriends recognised the heads; each shrieked and screamed at the sight, cursing the land that produced such a race and saying to each other: 'How can we ever recover? Not only are they exhuming the dead, appalling as that is, but they are killing the living in their fury. Let us all pray to Mohammed to avenge us! We have lost our means of escape on this side. If we do not get help from the emir, we shall all be hacked to death and killed.' Picture the anguish which filled the city.

152

On a slope downstream that looked down on Antioch, at the gate guarded by Hercules, brother of the emir, was a major road leading straight down to the port. The Turks, when the fancy took them, were in the habit of going to lurk in an old castle built by the Syrians and cut off the head of any unarmed Christian who happened to pass by: none escaped.²⁶⁸ The leaders were not at all pleased about this. 'My noble lords and gentlemen,' said Bohemond, 'this old castle poses a real threat to us. It is a hiding-place for pagans, ignoble cowards that they are. Let us put a garrison into it if you agree, because the way the Turks are using it is causing us real problems.'

'That sounds eminently sensible,' the leaders replied. So the oldest and most experienced were all in favour. However, not one knight was bold or brave enough to dare volunteer to mount guard on the trouble spot, stay in it or boast of his ability to defend it – until Tancred stood up, resplendent in crimson buckram.²⁶⁹ 'My lords,' he said, 'I take you all to witness that I shall guard the fort on the following conditions. I shall have my own soldiers and sergeants with me. And you will give me enough money to be able to buy provisions if we need them.' Our leaders handed over 400 silver marks. Tancred, son of the Marquis, did not hang about. He had a horn sounded, struck his tents, and made straight for the castle. On the very first night of his guard duty Tancred of Apulia had a major stroke of luck. Four hundred merchants came down from the mountains, Greeks and Armenians, Navarinians and Syrians all bringing provisions from the port of St Simeon to give to the ruler of the city Garsion; they were very concerned about his position.²⁷⁰ Tancred son of the Marquis spurred up to them with 500 knights, all brandishing their swords. The Turks made no effort whatsoever to defend themselves. The Christians tied them up and brought them along, appropriating all their cargo.

by making these exhumed heads.

²⁶⁸ This episode is common to AA (pp. 208–9) and *GF* (p. 43). In other sources Tancred builds the tower from scratch.

²⁶⁹ Buckram was a coarse cloth, possibly linen, but 'bougerant' also suits the rhyme.

²⁷⁰ Duparc-Quioic takes 'Navar' as Navarrese: it is not obvious, however, why these should be listed alongside Saracens.

They went back to the castle and disarmed: their booty was worth 1000 marks of fine Arabic gold.

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Tancred's first night went extremely well: he gained booty worth more than 1000 silver marks and made rich presents to his favourite knights. By this action he enhanced his value and gained much honour, for he went looking for provisions and often found them. He kept such a tight guard on the slopes of the mountains that no pagan or Saracen could get through. Anyone who followed him was sure to end up better off. The result of all this was high morale throughout the whole army. But only two weeks later they would find themselves suffering intensely, with the whole army in anguish from acute hunger and thirst to a point where brother could do nothing for brother.²⁷¹ Without the aid of the Lord who rules the world, the whole army would fall prey to agonising suffering. The Christians attacked Antioch repeatedly, but to no avail because the city was so strong. They could carry on attacking it until the Day of Judgement and still would not be able to take it by force or any other means. So they sat endlessly round the walls. May Omnipotent God help them take it!

154

The noble and brave army found itself in a land that was entirely strange to them and where they had no idea how to forage.²⁷² They rode 30 leagues round seeking provisions; meanwhile those waiting for them were in dire straits, not knowing how to cope with the desperate pangs of hunger. Meanwhile the knights who went out to wrest provisions from the pagans found nothing but hard fighting when they came across Turks. They had no food left, and morale was rock-bottom. May God help them as only He can!

²⁷¹ Duparc-Quioc argues that the description of famine is so vivid that it must reflect an eyewitness account by Richard le Pèlerin (*Edition*, p. 188). However, there are equally vivid descriptions in all the narrative accounts which could have informed the poet.

²⁷² *Laisses similaires* emphasise the magnitude of the problems the army now faced. Famine at this point is a strong theme in most sources: compare *GF*, p. 33; *AA*, pp. 216–17. The *Antioche* passes lightly over the details of foraging expeditions which dominate other sources here.

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The army was in a terrible state, devoid of all provisions. Nobody could offer anybody else any help or even moral support. The filthy weather had caught them out completely.²⁷³ Poverty reduced them to eating their everyday horses, while the spirited horses brought from Spain suffered so badly from hunger that they ate their halters and hurt their faces. Knights, sergeants and smooth-faced girls alike tore their clothes, shouting in their misery, 'Lord God who was hanged on the Cross, help us now!' All were pale-faced with the anguish of hunger. There were storms; snow and frost were on the ground; and every day brought tempests with lightning and thunder. None of the knights was brave or resolute enough not to be scared by such a turn of events. The din kicked up by the mules and horses and by the hawks and gerfalcons tied to their perches was loud enough to be heard a league-and-a-half away.²⁷⁴ Unless the Lord and King of Paradise takes urgent action, the whole Christian army is doomed!

156

My good Christian lords, I am not exaggerating when I say that no group of people has ever suffered so much – or shown so much courage – since the time of Julius Caesar or King David.²⁷⁵ The Franks made their intention absolutely clear: they would not go away or leave no matter how bad their situation until they had taken Antioch and gained command of its walls. If it was the will of Jesus, in whom they placed their trust, they would capture the Holy Sepulchre where His body rose from death, deliver Him from those who hated Him, and break down the wall and palisade of Mecca: they would drag out Mohammed and Apollo and give their gold to those who had served Jesus. Blessed be the lands that gave them birth!

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The brave Godfrey of Bouillon spoke. 'My noble Christian lords, in the name of God who is in Paradise, there is no need to worry about the weather that has set in. God will help us in His holy mercy. We have come to this country to show

²⁷³ Attested in other sources, e.g. the letter of Stephen of Blois (Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae*, no. X, pp. 149–52). It came as a surprise to the crusaders that the Middle East was not always hot and sunny.

²⁷⁴ Hawks were valued for hunting, not just for sport, but see *laisse* 89 above where the crusaders were praised for *not* frivolously wasting time on birds of prey.

²⁷⁵ The crusaders are set firmly in the mould of heroes of antiquity and the Old Testament; Godfrey of Bouillon would in the same way in the fourteenth century be promoted to the ranks of the Nine Worthies. See Introduction, chapter 1.

our love of Him; so He will not allow His people to perish. No matter what the conditions, we shall not give up on this siege! First we shall take Antioch and its vaulted palace. Then we shall capture the Sepulchre that saw God's Resurrection and deliver Him from all His enemies. We shall haul down the walls and palisade of Mecca. We shall drag out Mohammed from where he sits in the air.²⁷⁶ And we shall seize the two candelabra in front of him that used to be in Rome and were taken as tribute. They never go out: they will burn unceasingly (and would even burn if they were in the sea) until the Day of Judgement. Their place is in front of the altar in the Holy Sepulchre, not to be honoured and enjoyed by devils.²⁷⁷ His companions in arms replied: 'They will be taken! Blessed be the land that produced His body and His lineage!' Their bravery was so great and their morale so high that God, the King of Glory, would truly know them for His sons. From the start until the Day of Judgement the pilgrims who took the Sepulchre where God died and rose again and the whole land that produced Him will enjoy fame.

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I cannot pass on without saying more about the terrible famine the Christians suffered for the salvation of their souls. Anyone lucky enough to happen across a small loaf was delighted to give nine bezants for it; the raw thigh of a donkey fetched 100 sous, a pear (if available) five sous, and a couple of much-enjoyed beans cost a denier. The mass of the army found themselves reduced to eating

²⁷⁶ RC describes a splendid and barbaric statue of Mohammed among the spoils in the Temple in Jerusalem (p. 144). Muslims are frequently and wrongly depicted as idolators in the *chansons de geste*: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 387–415. The idea of a floating statue or coffin is found elsewhere: see A. Eckhardt, 'Le cercueil flottant de Mahomet', *Mélanges de philologie romane et de littérature médiévale offerts à E. Hoepffner* (Paris, 1949), pp. 77–88.

²⁷⁷ These candelabrae are referred to several times in the text: see also *laissez* 192 and 363. *The Book of Revelation*, chapter 11, refers to two candlesticks which stand before the Lord. Josephus describes the theft of the Menorah from Jerusalem by Titus, who placed the treasures in the Temple of Peace: *The Jewish War*, trans. G.A. Williamson, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 372. Procopius describes in his *History of the Wars* how the treasures were subsequently taken to Carthage by Gaiseric the Vandal at the sack of Rome in 455 (ed. and trans. Dewing (6 vols, Cambridge, MA, 1914), 3.5.3 in vol. 2, p. 47); they were regained by Justinian and Belisarius and taken first to Constantinople then Jerusalem (4.9.4 in vol. 2, p. 279). Jerusalem was captured by the Persians in 614 and the candelabrae removed then: S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1951–54), vol. 1, p. 10. The *Roman de Mahomet*, written in the mid-thirteenth century at Laon, refers to three golden candelabrae lit at the Nativity (vv. 1916–33): two are at Mohammed's tomb (in Mecca, v. 1956) and a third, which cannot be extinguished, at St Sophia's tomb in Constantinople; a further candle at Arras was added later: Alexandre du Pont, *Roman de Mahomet*, ed. Y. G. Lepage (Louvain, 1977), pp. 226–7.

their boots and shoes without seasoning; they even ate the soles.²⁷⁸ On every side people could be seen fainting away with hunger. Our barons were roused to anger by the sight. They came together to take counsel, then had it announced through the whole army that anyone who had enough provisions to live on should not hoard them but share them out with others: they should help each other to avoid hunger as long as it proved impossible to bring in food from outside. Anyone who did not cooperate would have their stash forcibly removed. Those who did have food did not wait to be dragged out and beaten: they shared it willingly, not daring to refuse, and moved by pity of those they saw distended by starvation.²⁷⁹ The Christians armed themselves and made ready to go to the port of St Simeon (as it is known) to buy food there if nobody would give it to them. The Turks had arranged for provisions to be brought there as part of a cunning plan. The Franks (God save them!) set off. The noble Lord Bohemond was in command along with the renowned Everard of Le Puiset; Count Rotrou of La Perche to provide a guard; the well-respected Raymond of St-Gilles; and Hugh of St-Pol, brave as a wild boar. They were accompanied by all the poor [of the army]. They arrived safely at the port of St Simeon and bought food. However, they made a bad mistake on the return journey. Once they had loaded the food and lashed it onto the pack animals they did not wait for each other but set off in a disorganised way. This, as I shall explain, was a very stupid thing to do. Without the help of Jesus, Saviour of the world, they were going to run into serious trouble: a good 15,000 Turks and Saracens were lying in wait on the way back, God curse them! They sought out the Franks at the port of St Simeon and inflicted indescribable slaughter on them. Our troops were thrown into total disarray. Anyone who did not make a quick getaway had his head cut off, so without waiting for each other those who could escape did. All you could hear were our forces lamenting the sad pass they were in. Bohemond, unable to put up a convincing resistance, turned back, as did Everard of Le Puiset and the handsome Raymond and the other knights. But the Turks chased them and peppered them with arrows: not a single Frank turned about to charge the enemy with one exception: Hugh of St-Pol. Unable to contain himself, he slung his shield over his arm, spurred his horse and struck the shield with the lance he carried. He hit Maltamin on his golden shield, splitting and splintering it from top to bottom; shattered his mailed hood and helmet, ripping the rings apart; plunged spear point and haft right into his heart, knocking him dead; and dispatched his soul to take up residence in Hell. Anyone who saw him sword in hand

²⁷⁸ The Chaplin-esque details of the famine look impressively realistic, but are in fact a topos of accounts of the Crusade: most have some list of prices at some point, e.g. *GF*, p. 62; *AA*, pp. 220–21; *RM*, p. 127; *GN*, p. 78; *RA*, p. 59.

²⁷⁹ See Riley-Smith, *Idea*, for food being given to the poor before Nicaea (pp. 64–5). Raymond and Adhemar established a confraternity to replace lost horses: J. Richard, 'La confrérie de la croisade: à propos d'un épisode de la première Croisade', *Etudes de civilisation médiévale IXe–XIIe siècles: mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande* (Poitiers, 1974), pp. 617–22.

was treated to a display of true chivalric valour as he sent 14 pagan heads flying. Meanwhile the Saracens and Esclers were pursuing Bohemond.

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Bohemond, Everard of Le Puiset and Raymond of St-Gilles galloped past a dark-coloured cliff: the Turks came spurring after them, firing off arrows from their bows of horn and making a great howling noise. Everard looked round and caught sight of his companions. 'My noble lord, we should turn round!' he shouted to Bohemond. 'Look, there is Hugh of St-Pol surrounded by these villainous Turks. If God does not help him we shall never see him again. Noble and courteous lord, we must help him: to leave him to his own devices would be shameful.'

'By my faith,' replied Bohemond, 'we shall do no such thing, please God. I trust God to ensure Hugh's safety. We should not have much self-respect if we lost him in this way; if we do not get him back the Turks will most certainly pay for it.'

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'My noble lord,' said Everard, 'you must turn round. After all, you are famous for your prowess. You are the son of the renowned Robert Guiscard, who arrived alone and facing an uncertain future from Normandy. All he had with him, as we all know, was his shield. His prowess was such that he rose to be ruler of Apulia and Calabria: that is the plain truth.²⁸⁰ Now is the time when you should be thinking of your father's fame: remember him and his great generosity. You can see for yourself the trouble Hugh of St-Pol is in, hard pressed by Turks and infidels. If we do not go to his aid that is it: he will be killed. The Turks have already inflicted serious damage on our people, slaughtering our women and killing our men. Now we can turn the tables on them if you will only fight!' Bohemond replied: 'I shall follow your urging. But we have pitifully small numbers compared to their massive forces. So may God who was hanged on the Cross come to our aid! I shall do my level best to take on the Turks and not give up even if I am torn limb from limb.' With these words, as you have heard, the good knights all swung their horses round. They only numbered 200 when counted. Picture them reaching the Turks in a group. They let the horses run free of control and landed massive blows on the pagans with their enamelled swords. 400 were killed with their first blows. By now Lord Hugh of St-Pol was on the ground: to his dismay his horse had been killed. He was on the point of capture or serious injury when Raymond of St-Gilles rode up at top speed, wielding his sword that had an inscription on the blade. He struck Alis of Antioch, who was a royal king, so hard that his head was

²⁸⁰ The author is well informed about Robert Guiscard. See J. J. Norwich, *The Normans in Sicily* (London, 1992).

sent flying before Hugh's eyes: his body slumped to the ground and his soul was carried off by demons. Lord Raymond of St-Gilles leaned over and grabbed the horse from which he had knocked the Turk: he gave it straight to Hugh of St-Pol, who was delighted at being remounted. Picture our five barons together, all out for vengeance with their sharp swords. A shout went up from the city of Antioch and out came at least 30,000 Turks armed to the teeth. Now may God and the Holy Trinity help our men! A messenger peeled off and rode back to the Christian army to let them know what was happening.²⁸¹ His first stop was the bishop of Le Puy. 'My noble lord,' he said, 'make haste in God's name! The Turks have utterly defeated our forces.' The bishop was appalled to hear this, but promptly restored morale through his great courage. The Holy Sepulchre was invoked immediately; horns were sounded all the way down through the army; and in little more than an hour 30,000 men were ready to fight. The bishop called the messenger back. 'Tell me, my friend, is this the true situation? Are our knights embroiled in battle with the cowardly pagans?'

'Yes my lord, by my faith: disbelieve me at your peril.'

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The messenger could not wait to tell what he knew. 'By God, my Lord Bishop, the last thing we need is a sermon: what our men really need is our help. The Turks are wreaking havoc on them at the port of St Simeon, killing our brothers and sisters as if there were no tomorrow. I have left Bohemond, Everard of Le Puiset, Raymond of St-Gilles, Hugh of St-Pol and the noble Rotrou in grave danger.' The bishop leapt into action. He seized a horn furiously and blew it; the Franks hastened to arm themselves in their barracks and lodgings. Had you been in the Christian army, you would have seen numerous lords arming themselves and preparing their weapons in front of their tents; green-sheened helmets glittering, shields with the symbol of a lion; innumerable rich flags and pennants; and swift Arab and Gascon horses as far as the eye could see, draped in silken cloths reaching to their feet, most of them in purple or siglaton.²⁸² Godfrey of Bouillon hastened to put on his armour. Antelm of Avignon laced up his greaves for him;²⁸³ the Duke put on his hauberk, laced up his round helmet, buckled his sword to his left side and mounted his bay horse from Carion;²⁸⁴ he hung his shield round his neck with the device facing outwards and seized his spear with its pennant. His shield was blue with a crimson dragon. He swung round and away with his companions, and made

²⁸¹ Mentioned elsewhere only in AA (pp. 240–41).

²⁸² Poetic licence. By this stage the horses were not in a good state and neither was the army. Also anachronistic: horse surcoats were not widely used before c. 1200 – France, *Western Warfare*, p. 24.

²⁸³ This is Antelm's only appearance in all the literature of the Crusade.

²⁸⁴ 'Carron' fits the rhyme scheme. Possibly should be rendered as 'gascon'.

off along a brook at full speed. Count Robert of Flanders was at the foot of the mountain and the count of Normandy with his men matched him easily, and the bishop kept to the plains on the side of the race of Mahomed. They crossed the bridge to seek vengeance. Godfrey urged his horse forward as fast as it could go, accompanied by the valiant Wicher the Swabian; Enguerrand of St-Pol, son of Hugh; Count Hugh [of Vermandois], brother of King Philip; and 700 seasoned knights. They made not for the thick of the battle but for the hill where Garsion had his command post. May God who forgave Longinus confound the Saracens! Here the Christians and Turks were hard at it, exchanging lance blows that made splinters fly and with such a clashing of iron and steel that it amazed the Turks who heard it. Godfrey, his blood up, was the first on the scene. He struck a Turk full on in the chest just below the chin and knocked him dead from the saddle with the force of his thrust. When his lance broke he threw it away onto the sand and drew his sword, which used to belong to Duke Samson.²⁸⁵ He laid about him on all sides mercilessly, and sliced a Turk in half right down to his lungs so that one half hung down on each side of the saddle.²⁸⁶ This feat dismayed the Persians and Slavs, and they gibbered in noisy confusion.

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When the duke's lance splintered and fell to pieces, he immediately drew his sword. He struck a Saracen on top of his helmet, slicing downwards so far into his vital organs that the two halves hung right down to ground level. The infidel bastards were thrown into confusion at the sight of such a blow, but worse was to come. The duke of Bouillon was in full fury: he saw red and his strength was doubled so that nobody he attacked stood any chance of survival. He glanced to the left and saw Calet of Mecca, him of the grizzled beard, on the other side of the battlefield; he had just beheaded a Christian. The duke was enraged at the sight: he gnashed his teeth in rage and swore, 'You made a mistake when you killed him, you coward! You will pay with your life!' He gave his horse its head and struck

²⁸⁵ Possibly reminiscent of Samson in the Bible. One of Charlemagne's Twelve Peers is Samson: *Roland*, vv. 105, 2408.

²⁸⁶ The text is confused about how many pagans Godfrey slices in half, not helped by the use of *laisses similaires*. Godfrey's feat was well known, appearing in many sources, though none by an eye-witness: RM, pp. 132–3; BB, p. 50; AA, pp. 244–5; RC, p. 79; OV, vol. 5, pp. 84–5, who vividly compares the blow to slicing a leek in half. RA says Godfrey 'hostes ... per medium dividebat (Godfrey cut through the middle of the enemy)', a phrase that may have been the origin of the feat. His exploit is a common topos of the *chanson de geste* (see Rychner, pp. 139–50). There is a parallel in *Pseudo-Turpin*, referring to Charlemagne: *An Anonymous Old French Translation of the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, ed. R. N. Walpole (Cambridge, MA, 1979), p. 71. For similar feats by Roland and Oliver see *Roland*, vv. 1196–205, 1225–9.

a massive blow with his steel sword right through the Turk. Just listen to what happened next! The duke slashed straight through the spine so that one half of the Turk fell to the ground while the other half stayed in the golden saddle, the body gripping on tight though the soul had gone, with the leg as stiff as if it had been fixed in position. The Franks cavorted with delight when they saw this, screaming 'Montjoie!' at the tops of their voices. The Turk's horse galloped off at full speed and made straight for Antioch, where the Turks and pagans were massed together. The horse left the earth soaked with blood in its wake. The race of the Devil was terrified at the sight, and so were those outside. 'These people are mad!' they muttered to each other. 'A curse on the land that produced them! The one who dealt out this blow is famous among them. If the others follow his example, we are done for, Antioch is lost and our lands will be laid waste.' Had you been there you would have heard the Turks kicking up such a din that the earth rang with it for more than a league around. Thousands of the pagans saw the blow: never again would they risk a charge or a skirmish.

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The battle was a fierce one and lasted all day. Many of the Turks were demoralised by the incident of the Turk being cut in half. Now let me tell you about the horse that carried the mutilated remains. It made its way through the main streets of Antioch, leaving a trail of blood on the road from the body. The Turks lamented loudly at the sight and cursed the man who had inflicted such a blow. They warned each other, 'If that is a sample of what the others can do, things look bad: not one of us will escape with his life.' A messenger turned back and made for the palace to give Garsion of Antioch the news. 'Lord Emir, listen to this in the name of Mohammed. Our forces are locked in combat with the Christians. If you do not send help they are lost, and I know for certain that none will return.' Garsion seized a horn and blew four blasts on it. The pagans ran to arm themselves and each prepared to fight. They marched out of the city as fast as they could and advanced. However, our Christian Franks, beloved by God, all rained blows on the Turks mercilessly; the more pagans came out, the more they killed. There was tumult on all sides. Garsion climbed up to the windows and sent for his son Sansadoine.²⁸⁷ 'My noble son,' he said, 'I shall not hide the truth: you may be watching a huge battle now but it will not last, because I am well aware that our troops will come off worst. Take it from me, any soldier who escapes will be a happy man.' Sansadoine burst into tears at this. He was on the point of running to arm himself when his father swore that Mohammed and Apollo would not take kindly to it; it was time for Tervagant to show his power and see which would

²⁸⁷ Alone of all the confusing multitude of Saracen sons, Sansadoine (Shams al-Dawla) is found in other sources: AA, pp. 226–7, 248–9; *GF*, pp. 50–51, BB, p. 60; GN, p. 94.

come off best: him or the God of the Franks. 'The worse for him if he does not win – who will ever want to follow him again?'

'My lord,' said Sansadoine, 'your lightest wish is my command.' The shouting and commotion of battle increased.

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There was nothing but bloodshed on the banks of the Orontes, and cries were heard on all sides. The rearguard marched out of Antioch. They numbered a good 30,000 with glittering green-sheened helmets. Our valiant forces, favoured by God, put up a stout resistance with their shining steel swords. The more Turks appeared, the more they killed, slashing through their heads and trunks and chests. A great tumult ensued on the bridge at Antioch. The Christians trapped the Turks in such a tight space that they put 20,000 to the sword and forced another 5000 off the edge into the water, where they were carried off to a watery death. When the Turks realised that the Franks had taken them so thoroughly by surprise that none of them was likely to escape with his life, they broke ranks and jostled to be first into the city. The Franks pursued them hotly but did not catch them. Lord Rainalt Porcet, an excellent knight, was swept into Antioch along with the Turks.²⁸⁹ He laid about him so effectively at the gate that he separated 15 Saracen heads from their bodies. But now God needs to spare a thought for him in His infinite mercy! The Turks bolted the gate and Rainald was pursued on all sides. He defended himself as a brave knight should. When the Turks killed his horse with their bows of horn so that it fell dead beneath him, he leapt from it onto a vaulted arcade beneath a battlement. There he defended himself, protecting himself with his shield; anyone he struck had no chance of survival. At this point I shall leave him to his own devices and commend him to God's help: you will hear shortly whether he lived or died.²⁹⁰ Instead I shall tell you about the Turks (God curse them!) who were trapped on the battlefield the other side of the bridge. When they saw the gates and posterns of Antioch closed they were terrified that they were going to die. In a flat panic they ran down to the waters of the Orontes, took a flying leap and started swimming.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ Nelson's edition inserts an additional *laisse* here about the bisected Saracen and a battle on the bridge.

²⁸⁹ The only other writer to tell the story of Rainalt Porcet is PT, pp. 58–9.

²⁹⁰ A rather clumsy cliffhanger. Rainalt's story is interwoven with the narrative until *laisse* 187; the conflict is to some extent personalised around him.

²⁹¹ Most of the sources tell how the Turks were cornered on the bridge and slaughter ensued: see Asbridge, *First Crusade*, pp. 190–93, for description of the battle and analysis of its effect in raising morale. The *Antioche* develops the episode in considerable detail.

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As the Turks swam down the Orontes, some of them grabbed the supports of the bridge. Our brave sergeants leapt to fend them off, knocking them back down with their heavy iron blades and slashing at their legs and chests. The Turks tumbled back down into the fast-flowing water, beaten back by the Christians: none was spared and the water and arches of the bridge were suffused with blood. Now picture Bohemond, Tancred of Apulia, Everard of Le Puiset and Robert of Normandy shouting at the tops of their voices: 'Forward, gentlemen! Let's make sure the Turks don't have anything to go boasting about.'

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Upstream from the arches of the bridge a stake was fixed in the Orontes:²⁹² the Turks used it to catch fish with their contraptions. Two hundred Turks swam to it and stopped there. They were completely unarmed, not one having a weapon. The Christians looked down at them from both sides of the bridge and a muttering arose: 'They're getting away scot-free!' 'What on earth are our best swimmers doing?' shouted Bohemond. 'These Turks are going to get away if they don't do something about it.'

167²⁹³

The Turks were clinging to the underside of the bridge, expecting the worst: they were terrified of being killed and beheaded. However, they were pretty sure that nobody would be able to find them to plunge a spear into them, draw a sword or mount an attack. So I reckon they were well placed to slip away at nightfall. When our nobles realised that the Turks might hold out that long, they were dismayed. However, none was brave enough to go into the river: the water was extremely deep, which put them off, and the Turks up on the walls were throwing lances and firing crossbows at them. In this impasse let me tell you what Lord Raimbaut Creton did in an unparalleled feat of bravery:²⁹⁴ He took off his helmet but kept his hauberk on to ensure he did not leave himself unprotected; then he drew his

²⁹² 'Desor' means 'above, on top of': however this sits oddly with the description in the next *laisse*. ms C alters to 'desos' ('beneath').

²⁹³ Nelson's edition here gives an additional *laisse* on Raimbald Creton.

²⁹⁴ Another anecdote of individual heroism found only in the *Antioche*, which might be described as a mini-epic within an epic. The real life Raimbaut had a monk beaten up and castrated after returning to Europe: Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, pp. 155–6. In ms G of Baudri of Bourgueil (p. 50), this exploit is ascribed to a soldier of Godfrey called Wicher. Duparc-Quioic points out that Raimbald here is taken to Godfrey's tent (*Edition*, p. 207).

sword of bright glittering steel and took up a long lance with a foreign blade. He leapt into the water with no thought that he might sink; plunging into the Orontes he started swimming and made straight for the spot where the Turks had taken refuge. He swam so fast (Jesus preserve him!) that he was soon at the stake and started to climb. Our Franks all crowded along the riverbank to watch him. They beseeched Jesus fervently, calling on the Holy Sepulchre where Jesus was laid, to bring Raimbald back safe and sound without being drowned or suffering any injury: each prayed to Jesus to save him.

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Raimbaut Creton now had a firm hold on the stake. The noble knight scrambled up it until he reached a nail on which he could kneel. Over to the left of the bridge he saw the Turks huddled on an embankment built in the river by their compatriots. He stretched forward his lance with its glittering tip and plunged it into the chest of a Turk; the lance went right through and split the heart in two. The pagans were horrified at this. They were convinced that there must be more bold Franks on their way, and even the bravest among them was too scared to fight on. Raimbaut Creton drew his burnished sword and sliced apart Turkish heads, arms and chests, legs and feet, foreheads and brains. He killed a good half of the 200; the other hundred leapt into the Orontes and were carried away to their deaths by the rushing water. More than 20,000 Franks called down blessings on Raimbaut.

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Raimbald killed and dismembered the Turks and kicked their bodies into the river to be carried away downstream under the gaze of 20,000 Franks. The brave and venerable bishop of Le Puy watched. So did Holy God who was hanged on the Cross, the glorious celestial being who is the Salvation of the world. Raimbald scrambled down and leapt off the stake. The Turks up on the walls shrieked at the top of their voices in their own Saracen language: 'You coward! You won't get away with this!' They rained feathered bolts on him from their Turkish bows; his hauberk was broken and dented under the impact and he suffered 15 wounds. Crimson blood streamed from his injuries. The Franks called to him: 'Come on, Lord Raimbald! It will be our loss if you cannot get away, because there is no way we can come and retrieve you.' Raimbald heard them and turned towards them. By now he was swimming very feebly because he was so badly injured. The Turks continued to rain spears and darts down on him, striking him on the back and the head. He lost consciousness and sank to the bottom. Now may God preserve him in His holy goodness! The Christians lamented bitterly when they saw this, calling on the Holy Sepulchre. The young men in the army rushed forward, 414 of them: they stripped off and leapt into the water, each a fast swimmer. Meanwhile the

other Franks protected them from the Turks. Now you are going to hear about an amazing miracle, the most amazing you will ever hear. Raimbaut Creton was relieved of the weight of his armour in the water. His hauberk was taken off at God's command and he was brought back to the surface by St Michael.²⁹⁵ When those swimming to his aid saw him, 20 of them seized his body. They pulled him to the bank amid great rejoicing because he was still alive, God be praised! He was kissed and embraced there on the bank. He had lost so much blood that he was very pale: no man had ever survived such an exploit. He was carried to the tent of the duke of Bouillon, who had doctors sent for and catered to his every wish until he had recovered fully from his wounds. Later he was there at the fall of Jerusalem.²⁹⁶ He was an excellent knight and popular with all. Our nobles returned to their lodgings and tents. That day they captured the emir of the Esclers and held him prisoner in the tent of Hugh of Vermandois; the emir was Garsion's nephew, son of his sister. You can be sure he will be very upset when he finds out! Before I tell you anything else about him (this is all true) I am going to describe how Rainalt Porcet was forced out of his hiding place if you would like to hear.

170²⁹⁷

My lords, God give you honour. Let me tell you about the sad fate of Rainalt Porcet – although he took a fair few of the Turks with him. He was up on the battlements of a courtyard. The Turks and Saracens were attacking him vigorously and he was defending himself with great courage. He held his shield in front of him and wielded his glittering sword: anyone he attacked stood no hope of escape. His blood was up and he killed 20 of his opponents. However, he could see that he was not going to escape with his life, and that he would of necessity be dead before the day was out. He implored God who makes the flowers bloom to have mercy on his soul in His infinite goodness. Then he renewed his grip on his shield, drew his sword vigorously and ran towards the pagans, his hated enemies. They were terrified of him and ran away. The knight positioned himself at the entrance to a cellar with his back to the door. He was in mortal danger, with the Turks attacking him relentlessly. They rained Turkish arrows on him and there was a great deal of shouting. Rainalt Porcet stepped towards them and struck an *almacour*:²⁹⁸ he sliced

²⁹⁵ Another miracle showing divine approbation of the Crusade.

²⁹⁶ Ms D of the *Antioche* and ms G of Baudri of Bourgueil (BB, p. 102, var.8) both refer to Raimbaud at the fall of Jerusalem.

²⁹⁷ Nelson's edition here gives two additional *laisses* on the battle at the bridge and Rainalt Porcet.

²⁹⁸ Arabic *al-Mansour*: literally 'victorious'. Frequently used to mean 'emir' or 'leader' in OF: see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 844–6. The term derives from the soubriquet of Ibn Abi Ashir, a tenth-century chamberlain, *Al Mansur bi'llah*, 'victorious by Allah'.

him in half in full view so that the halves fell apart. That sparked commotion. The cowardly tricksters were horrified at such a blow and not one of them wanted to be in the vicinity when a messenger went to tell Garsion up in his tower.

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'My lord,' he said, 'I come with strange and terrible news. Down there is a Frank who is inflicting such damage on your forces that nobody he attacks has any need of a doctor.²⁹⁹ No lance thrust nor sword blow has any effect on him. He cut the almacour of Montire in half with one blow.' Garsion nearly went berserk with rage at this. 'Alas!' he said, 'What sort of a race are they? If all of them put together cannot defeat one single Frank, may they suffer death of the worst description.' He hastened to arm himself over a Syrian robe and mounted his warhorse.³⁰⁰ A large retinue followed him to be spectators at the death and suffering of the Frank. Now may the God of consolation watch over him. I can tell you for certain that even if there were 1000 of him none would escape whether the best or the worst.

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Garsion rode forward in a towering rage with his son Sansadoine. A large crowd followed them, keen to see the Frank for themselves. Garsion came to a halt in front of the building, leaving a prudent distance of an *arpent* between him and it.³⁰¹ More than 1500 Turks crowded round him, all complaining at the tops of their voices: 'Ah, King of Antioch, this Christian and his bravery are causing us unbelievable problems! For your information, he is the lord on whom the whole army depends. Anyone who could take him alive would have done a real service because we would get satisfaction and revenge.' Garsion listened to this then went forward straight away. He addressed Rainalt Porcet with formal politeness. 'Lord knight, what is your name? Tell me truly.'³⁰² Rainalt replied: 'I am not frightened to tell you who I am: concealing my identity would be wrong. I am known throughout the army as Rainalt Porcet. I and all my relations come of a noble family. I can see my judgement, suffering and death are imminent, but I would not renounce my faith for a whole valley full of silver. I shall suffer death for God and

²⁹⁹ i.e. they are killed outright or too badly injured to recover.

³⁰⁰ 'de Sire' might also mean 'from Tyre' (Sur in Arabic): Tyre was famous for its purple dye.

³⁰¹ An arpent is a measure of area rather than distance, about 100–160 square yards. Chosen to fit the metre?

³⁰² Garsion may be a Saracen but he is depicted following formal chivalric codes of politeness. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 326–33.

my own salvation. And before I do, I shall avenge myself on these Turks: I shall make all of you suffer before I breathe my last.'

'You are talking rubbish, you minion,' said Garsion. 'Instead I am going to put you in prison on the understanding that, if you decide to worship Mohammed in good faith, I shall have you sent to the sultan as a present: you will be lord of Persia and all its dependencies.'³⁰³

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'Rainalt,' said Garsion, 'you are a very brave man. Do what I say. If you agree to believe in Mohammed and our God Tervagant, I shall send you to our emir the sultan and he will make you a general, or a king, or an emir.'

'I don't need any sermons from you, you pagan!' said Rainalt. 'I couldn't care less about you or all your gods. I came to this land to avenge Lord God, the Father and Redeemer, on the infidels. I reckon I must have killed 300 of them already, and I shall kill as many again – or more – if I can. If I manage to take this town the Franks will be overjoyed. I shall hand it over to Bohemond of Apulia, son of the brave warrior Robert Guiscard. Then, God willing, we shall march on to Jerusalem and take the Sepulchre where God rose to life again. And then we shall conquer more land all the way to the East.' Garsion was furious at this response. He yelled at the top of his voice: 'Come on, Persians! What are you waiting for? Get on and attack him from in front and behind! Surely we cannot be so cowardly that we cannot capture or kill him!' He dismounted from his swift horse and came running up to the building through the entrance; several men accompanied him, though I do not know how many. Every one had a mailed hood and glittering green-sheened helmet, with a sharpened axe or javelin or some kind of sharp weapon. They came to the doors of the cellar, yanked them open and flung their javelins at Rainalt while those outside aimed theirs at him in profusion. The knight defended himself with drawn sword. With his first blow he killed a nephew of the emir; his second blow killed Principle and his third Malquidant; the fourth felled the king of the Asues and the fifth Roboant; the sixth put paid to Clariel and the seventh Morgant.³⁰⁴ The pagans rushed on him all together, yelling as one. And they captured him, the cowards. They battered him so hard with their maces that he bled all over, so much so that blood streamed from his mouth. Rainalt called on God, the King of Bethlehem, to have mercy on his soul and offer him a fitting death prayer.

³⁰³ A routine invitation to captured Christians: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 494–9. Rainalt Porcet's response is equally routine.

³⁰⁴ Standard issue Saracen names with no historical basis.

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So the Saracens and Esclers captured Rainalt Porcet. They rained mace blows on him like the infidel cowards they were. Meanwhile Rainalt called on God in His holy majesty to take pity and have mercy on his soul. The Turks would certainly have killed him then and there if Garsion had not shouted orders, swearing by Mohammed that nobody should touch the Frenchman nor go anywhere near him. Garsion's son Sansadoine extricated him from the Turks; Garsion came forward and relieved him of his sword. The Turks hoisted him onto a horse, fainting and covered in blood, and carried him off to Garsion's palace. Throwing down a rug in the middle of the room, they sat Rainalt down on it and disarmed him. Garsion addressed him as follows: 'Well, Rainalt Porcet, have you thought things over? Will you call upon Mohammed in his holy goodness?'

'Absolutely not,' replied Rainalt, 'no more than I would a dead dog.³⁰⁵ Kill me in God's name because I desire Him more than anything.' Garsion replied, 'That is not the answer I was looking for.' He sent for four of his doctors, who cured Rainalt of his wounds and got him back on his feet. Twenty Turks were assigned to mount a permanent guard on him even though they had also shackled him. He was allowed to choose clothes and shoes and given plenty to eat and drink. They frequently led him down into the city and all the way around it. Alas! He was to pay a high price for all this.

Meanwhile back in the Christian army scarcity was the order of the day. There was little if any food and morale was low. Lord Peter the Hermit was in his tent when the King of the Tafurs came to see him, accompanied by more than a thousand of his followers.³⁰⁶ All of them had stomachs swollen by hunger. 'My lord,' they said, 'for holy charity's sake tell us what to do. In truth, we are dying of hunger and deprivation.' Lord Peter replied: 'That is because you cannot bring yourselves to do what needs to be done. Go and fetch those [dead] Turks lying over there on the battlefield. They would taste perfectly all right if you cooked and seasoned them properly.' The King of the Tafurs said, 'You're right, you know.' He left Peter's tent and had his beggar army summoned: when all assembled there were more than ten thousand. They flayed the Turks, cutting off the skin, then boiled and roasted the flesh; they ate their fill, although there was no bread to go with it. The pagans were absolutely terrified. Alerted by the smell of meat cooking, they all hung over the walls. The beggars had an audience of twenty thousand pagans, every last Turk sobbing and heartbroken as they watched their own people being eaten. 'Alas Lord Mohammed! This is appallingly cruel behaviour! Make

³⁰⁵ By luck or judgement, this is deeply offensive to Islam.

³⁰⁶ Crusade sources refer to cannibalism later at Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man: Asbridge, *First Crusade*, p. 274. See also RA, p. 81; GF, p. 80; FC, p. 112. However there is no reference to it at Antioch. As with other incidents that caught the author's imagination, cannibalism is invoked several times in the text. For the link to the Tafurs see Introduction, chapter 3. It is interesting that Peter makes the suggestion here.

sure you take vengeance on those who have put you to such shame and insulted you beyond belief by eating your own people. These are not Frenchman – they are living devils! May Mohammed curse them and their Christian religion! If that is the sort of thing they are capable of, we shall be humiliated and defeated.’

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Now the King of the Tafurs along with his numerous companions set to work with a will. They used their sharp keen knives to skin the Turks down on the battlefields; they carved them into joints in full view of the pagans and boiled or barbecued them till they were done to a turn. Then they gobbled them eagerly without bread or any seasoning, saying to each other: ‘This is absolutely delicious – much better than pork or roast gammon.’³⁰⁷ More fool anyone who dies among this kind of plenty.’ The King and his barons ate to their hearts’ content. The smell of roast Turk was so strong that the cry went up all over Antioch: the Franks were eating the Turks they had killed. The infidels crowded up onto the ramparts, while the walls were completely full even of Saracen women. Garsion went up to the highest windows with his son Sansadoine and his nephew Ysoré;³⁰⁸ there must have been a good thousand infidels, both young and bearded with age. Garsion addressed them: ‘In the name of Mohammed, look! See how these devils are eating our own people.’ The King of the Tafurs looked up at the assembled infidels, including large numbers of women and girls. He called all his followers together and marched them off to the communal graves. They exhumed the bodies and carried them all up onto a hill; they flung the decomposing ones into the Orontes and skinned the others, hanging the meat to dry in the wind.³⁰⁹ Count Robert came up to them with Bohemond and Tancred, the highly esteemed duke of Bouillon, Count Hugh of Vermandois and the noble and sagacious bishop of Le Puy; all the commanders without exception accompanied them, but every last one in armour and carrying weapons. They all came to a halt in front of the King of the Tafurs and asked him jocularly: ‘How’s it going?’

‘In faith,’ replied the King, ‘I must say I feel very well fed. There is plenty to eat though I wouldn’t say no to a drink to wash it down.’

‘Certainly,’ said the duke of Bouillon, ‘have a drink’. He had a bottle of good wine from his own private supply presented. The King of the Tafurs had a swig and passed it round. Meanwhile Garsion was leaning over the palace balconies. He called to Bohemond and Count Hugh by name to get their attention. ‘My lord,’

³⁰⁷ Muslims do not eat pork: this is (deliberately?) offensive to Muslim sensibilities.

³⁰⁸ Well attested as a Saracen name; see the *Dramatis personae*.

³⁰⁹ Meat would usually be salted to preserve it: C. Spencer, *British Food: An Extraordinary Thousand Years of History* (London, 2002), p. 59. However, this was hardly practical on crusade: this was an alternative method that must have given a result rather like beef jerky or biltong.

said Garsion, 'you have been very poorly advised in having our dead flayed and exhumed. By Mohammed, you know this is terrible behaviour.'

'My lord,' replied Bohemond, 'none of this can be laid at our door. We did not order it and it wasn't on our initiative. The responsibility lies with the King of the Tafurs, their leader. They are a ferocious people who detest you: as far as they're concerned Turkish flesh tastes better than spiced peacock.'³¹⁰ The King of the Tafurs fears nobody.'

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'Bohemond of Sicily,' said King Garsion, 'if you agree, let us declare a truce for fifteen days.'³¹¹ If you so wish we can try and reach some kind of agreement in that time. I am holding one of your barons captive in here: he tells me his name is Rainalt. Conversely, you have taken my nephew prisoner. If we can arrange it we might exchange the two on terms agreed between us.'

'I am very happy to consider it, noble lord,' said Bohemond, 'but I should like to discuss it with the Frankish leaders first and come back to you as soon as possible.'

'I am content,' replied the king. Bohemond and Lord Hugh called the leaders together and took them through the discussion. They gave their reaction: 'My lord, go back and tell him we are happy to agree. It would be a real boost to have Rainalt back, because we do not have anyone else of his calibre amongst us. Offer a truce of four days: we would go along with that.' Bohemond immediately wheeled round: he and Count Hugh, riding a Gascon horse, spurred back to King Garsion. 'Garsion,' said Duke Bohemond, 'listen to our response. We agree a truce of no more than three days. If you want to make peace we are happy to negotiate; if you do not we shall carry on anyway and I can't see us reaching any agreement until we have the city. But if you want a truce we are happy to agree one with you.'

'And I with you,' said the king. 'We solemnly swear, on condition that we can bury our dead in peace, and that you will not make any incursion or we any sortie.'

'We agree to those terms until and unless there are any formal negotiations and agreements,' said Duke Bohemond. So they agreed on a mutual truce with nobody to be killed.

³¹⁰ The word 'averse' is used to describe the Tafurs: Saracens are often similarly designated (T-L, vol. 1, p. 729). Peacock was a luxury dish at medieval banquets. For a recipe for roast peacock see the recipe from Harleian ms 4016 in Austin, p. 76.

³¹¹ RM gives an account of such a truce, although in his account it is broken by the Saracens killing the constable Walo II of Chaumont-en-Vexin (pp. 139–41).

So a truce came into effect by mutual agreement. Bohemond swung round and made his way back. The same day a pagan met his end in Antioch: he was the son of one of Garsion's favourite emirs, in charge of one of the main gates that faced northwards. The father of the dead man sent word to Lord Garsion, who dropped everything to come when he got the message. He showed his grief freely out of respect for the bereaved infidel. The father laid out his son with great magnificence. He dressed him in splendid clothes, and then equipped him with all the armaments he had used in battle: mail coat, glittering green-sheened helmet and sword. The sword he buckled round him was originally forged by Irashels and completed by Wayland.³¹² The latter spent a year tempering it; to reflect the fact he had done it twice he then christened it 'Twice-tempered'. Once he had admired his handiwork, he tried the sword by plunging it into a tree-trunk, which he slashed in half all the way down to the ground. It first belonged to Alexander who conquered the world; then to Ptolemy; then Judas Maccabeus; thereafter it moved from owner to owner until Vespasian, God's avenger, made an offering of it at the Holy Sepulchre where God was resurrected. After that it passed to Cornumarant and his father Corbadas.³¹³ He gave it to somebody who betrayed Jerusalem. After that he did not leave it in the city for another day: it came to Antioch where it was handed down. He underwent a pagan marriage with Garsion's sister, and the result of the union was this pagan who buckled on the sword.³¹⁴

Once the corpse was royally dressed the father placed a crown on its head. Garsion of Antioch summoned 1000 Turks for that night: they carried the dead pagan away for burial, Garsion and the father riding along with them. They left Antioch by the further gate. 'My lords and nobles,' said Garsion, 'listen to me. If the Franks realise what we are doing, there will be serious consequences: the King of the Tafurs will dig for our dead compatriot, exhume him and eat him.'

'My lord,' said the pagans, 'nobody will find out.' They buried the body in an old disused cemetery. Each came forward; the father put an image by his son's head in honour of Mohammed whom he served and would continue to serve,³¹⁵

³¹² Irashels is not found elsewhere. Wayland, the Norse hero, is well attested in other epics as a swordsmith: see for example *Raoul de Cambrai*, v. 489; *Ronsasvals*, in *Le Roland Occitan*, ed. and trans. G. Gouiran and R. Lafont (Paris, 1991), vv. 41, 1592. See also *Moisan*, vol. 1, p. 442.

³¹³ Corbadas is the king of Jerusalem in the *Jérusalem*; corresponding to the historical Fatimid governor Ifukhar ad-Daulah. Cornumarant is his son. The chronology is rather adrift since the crusaders will go on to meet them even though they are referred to here as if in the past.

³¹⁴ Alexander and Judas Maccabeus were both counted amongst the Nine Worthies, as would later be Godfrey himself.

³¹⁵ This is one of several instances of the writer not knowing or disregarding the Muslim proscription of images.

and tucked 2000 bezants under the feet. He was laid in a fine coffin. Once the body was buried all the mourners left; his father took the lead in mourning his loss. The following morning when the sun rose, Garsion leaned on the windowsills of his palace – and was greeted by the sight of an impressive Frankish army. He wailed in anguish and called upon Mohammed.

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Garsion climbed up to look out of the marble-framed windows and saw just how large the Frankish blockade was. He called upon Mohammed and wailed in anguish: 'Apollon, look at the size of that force down there! They will not be satisfied until they have taken my city. As far as I'm concerned, better dead than disinherited.' A terrible scheme took shape in his mind. He sent for Rainalt Porcet, who was brought to him richly dressed, well shod and equipped. 'Rainalt,' said Garsion, 'you are coming with me. If you can help me reach agreement with your Turks you will make yourself rich and respected for ever more.'

'I shall do as you wish,' said Rainalt Porcet. Garsion of Antioch mounted his horse, accompanied by his son Sansadoine and at the head of 15,000 infidels. Bohemond was invited to the Gate of Hercules; so were the duke of Bouillon and the brave Tancred, and the highly respected Count Hugh of Vermandois; the duke of Normandy went with them and Robert the Frisian was not left out. All of our numerous leaders were there. Now may God and the Holy Trinity be with them as they negotiate, because they are about to be presented with a large inducement: they will pay a high price if they accept and many Christians will suffer as a result! The leaders assembled on the bridge ready to parley.

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Garsion of Antioch was a very slippery customer. He called to Bohemond and took him to one side along with Count Robert (the one from Normandy), the noble-looking duke of Bouillon and along with them Count Hugh, who had no truck with anything untoward. Garsion addressed them: listen to his offer. 'My lords, I shall give you a large share of my treasure, and once you have seized Jerusalem I shall put my city in your power. Give me back my nephew, the emir of Persia, and in return you will get Rainalt back alive and unharmed. Moreover I shall give you 300 pack animals loaded with provisions to help you on your way.' They were just about to conclude the agreement on oath when the duke of Bouillon said that he would not sign up to it unless Rainalt and the large and ancient tower were handed

over first: that would be the necessary precondition to making and pledging the agreement.³¹⁶

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When Garsion saw that the deal was falling apart, he had another go at sweet-talking our leaders: 'My lords, surely you cannot suspect me of double-dealing! I would never do such a thing even if I were to suffer the agonies of being burned alive. You can see for yourselves that I do not wish you any harm.' He had Rainalt Porcet brought out under their assembled gaze, sitting on a mule and richly dressed. Our leaders asked him how he was; he gave them a full account and explained how well Garsion had treated him. Our leaders were delighted to hear this and assured each other: 'No question: of course he will keep his word.' But you can be sure they were all taken in with the exception of the duke, who said immediately: 'I am not signing up to any agreement if the palace is not handed over first.'

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When Garsion realised that not only was the agreement some way from being concluded but also that none of his cunning plans to deceive the Franks was working, he addressed Bohemond again in feigned anger: 'Hand over my nephew, the emir of Persia: let us exchange prisoners.'

'You shall have him, in faith,' said Robert of Normandy. They brought up the emir, but he was in a pretty sorry state: he had been wounded by four sharp spear blows so severely that there was no prospect of recovery. The blood drained from Garsion's face when he saw him: he realised that there was no chance of his regaining his health.

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As soon as he saw his nephew Garsion of Antioch realised that there was no chance of a cure: he had lost too much blood. Full of anger, he flew into a rage. He swore under his breath by Mohammed and Cahu that the exchange of prisoners was no longer going to happen and that Rainalt Porcet would pay a high price.³¹⁷ 'My lords,' he said, 'I am white-haired with age. You know what our agreement

³¹⁶ Typically Godfrey is shown as having shrewder judgement than his colleagues. These negotiations are not found in the historical sources.

³¹⁷ Cahu is another Saracen god of the *chanson de geste*, though less frequently encountered than Mohammed, Apollon and Tervagant. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, p. 384, who suggests the name means 'chaos'.

was. I shall not bear lance or shield against you, and you will be treated with respect as far as is in my power in future. I shall order my people back from their positions outside the town. I do not want this agreement to be widely known; so although you will have the main tower, the Chapalu Palace, I intend to hand it over quietly.³¹⁸ Our leaders greeted this with acclamation.

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Garsion called his nephew forward for a discussion. He asked him surreptitiously, 'What state is the [Christian] army in? Is it well provisioned?'

'In the name of Mohammed, no, uncle. They are desperate with hunger. They are completely without food and at their wits' end. They can only hold out for another eight days because both parts of the army are swollen with hunger.³¹⁹ Do not make the mistake of giving up your city on my account: my life is worth nothing because I am so badly wounded that I cannot live.' Garsion burst into tears when he heard this. He addressed our barons, asking for a break in negotiations; this was willingly accorded. Listen to the unhelpful action taken by the Tafur king. While the infidels and the Franks were negotiating, he captured a general called Josué. One of the infidels reported this to the king in short order. Garsion was furious at the news, and hatched a terrible response. He lost no time in having Bohemond summoned to come and talk to him under the walls of the tower. As soon as he came, the king addressed him in these words: 'Sir, you have behaved very badly. We had agreed a truce between us: you have broken it by taking captive the general out there on the field.' Bohemond replied: 'That was not our intention. If any of your men are being held prisoner you shall have them straight back unharmed in accordance with your wishes. You have absolutely no cause for concern.'

'Very well,' replied Garsion, 'I accept your assurances.' Bohemond went back down to his tent. That night there was plenty to eat for the army. The King of the Tafurs brought his prisoner and handed him into the keeping of Bohemond of Sicily; Bohemond took custody of him, thanking the King, and had him stay for supper that evening. King Garsion was bursting with anger. He got up at dawn the next day and had all his nobles summoned to the palace. 'My lords,' he said, 'shall I tell you what I have been thinking? The Franks are besieging us as hard as they can. They will not leave until they have defeated me, unless they have to; I shall have no peace as long as I live until they have taken this town and this palace. But by Mohammed I shall have my head chopped off rather than let them take all my

³¹⁸ Chapalu is also the name of the sultan's palace at Sarmazane in the *Chétifs*. For use as a personal name, see Moisan, vol. 1, p. 287.

³¹⁹ The reference to both parts presumably refers to the split in the Christian forces before the battle of Dorylaeum; it is not clear from the sources that the army was divided here.

possessions in this way. They are behaving cruelly and killing our men; yesterday they took the general captive; and although we agreed a truce they have broken their word to me. By my faith in Mohammed, whom I have adored, the Frank we have taken will pay the price for their actions. By the time they get him back I shall have made it my business to see that he will never command knights or spur a horse again!’ By this time Garsion had worked himself up into a rage. He yelled at the top of his voice: ‘Go and get me that Frankish infidel right now!’ The pagans ran to do his bidding and dragged Rainalt into his presence – may Jesus help him in his infinite piety! The pagans stripped Rainalt naked in double-quick time, ripping off his shoes, hose and breeches, while he called on the holy majesty of God.

184

Garsion of Antioch was in a towering rage. He had a long wide trestle table cut from a single log put on two marble supports. He called for Estorgant and Gondris, Flohalt and Gondran, Guinebalt and Sanguis, King Lokiifer and Cassadran of Monbis – eight pagans accursed by God – and addressed them as follows.³²⁰ ‘Take Rainalt Porcet, the mass murderer of my Turks. Spreadeagle him on this table. Sear his calves with sulphur and red-hot brands; burn his sinews and veins until they are damaged beyond repair. He will see his Frankish cronies again over my dead body.’

‘He will suffer horribly!’ replied the Turks.³²¹ Rainalt Porcet was seized from many directions. They lashed him with knotted leather cords, so hard that blood ran in 30 places. All the while he called on God who was put on the Cross: ‘Our Father in glory, true King of Paradise, you who brought Lazarus’s body back from the dead, and saved the prophet Daniel from the lions, and watched over Jonah in the whale and kept him alive, as you are the true Lord who rose from the dead, have mercy on my soul because my body is done for!’ He beat his breast in penitence and called on God’s mercy.³²²

³²⁰ Most of these are identikit Saracen names from *chanson de geste* tradition. See *Dramatis personae*.

³²¹ For Saracen torture and atrocities see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 198–9. There are deliberate reminiscences of the Passion of Christ.

³²² Rainalt follows the standard procedure for Christians faced with imminent death. His prayer is a shortened version of the ‘*prière du plus grand péril*’ that recounts various events of the Bible as a prelude to seeking divine help: compare Vivien at *Guillaume*, vv. 799–816, and see Introduction, chapter 3. ‘*Battre sa coulpe*’ is the final confession of sins before death: compare, famously, *Roland*, vv. 2355–96. This implies that Rainalt ends up dead: see note to *laisse* 186 for supporting evidence.

185

The wicked Saracens grabbed Rainalt Porcet. They flung him across the table in the shape of a cross, tying him hand and foot. They charred his calves with smouldering wood and coals, red-hot boiling iron, sulphur and molten lead; they seared the veins in his arms and his heels too. Rainalt bellowed out, shouting at the top of his voice: 'Our glorious Lord and Father who suffered for us, have pity on my soul and truly forgive my sins. Alas! If only you knew, my noble Lord Bohemond, and Hugh of Vermandois, and you the duke of Bouillon, quite what these Saracen bastards are doing to me! Do not even consider a ransom from them. You would be totally stupid to exchange me for any of the Turks held in your jails. I shall never be putting on spurs to joust again, or getting into the saddle, or have any place as a leader in battle. By the body of St Simeon, if I were to live longer I would still be slicing pagans in half down through the lung!' Garsion lost his temper at these words. He angrily struck him four times with a stick and left him with blood trickling down his chin. 'You coward,' said Rainalt, 'you have shown yourself to be totally untrustworthy. You gave me food: now you are killing me as you would a thief. Tervagant and Mohammed will be powerless to save you from the Christians' revenge.'

186

Garsion gave orders for Rainalt to be untied and handed over into the keeping of his doctors. They dressed his wounds and trimmed back his sinews; nevertheless Rainalt was left unable either to stand or walk. Garsion now had him splendidly dressed, draped and shod in rich silks; then he had him lifted onto a swift warhorse and lashed to the saddle fore and aft to ensure he did not slip and fall, and had him led to the gate and walked round. He then sent word to Bohemond to come and parley with him; if he brought his prisoners along, he could have his own man back in one piece. Bohemond came along accompanied with a large force of strong knights and by the duke [of Bouillon], the count and the noble leaders. The moment Rainalt saw them he began shouting: 'Bohemond of Sicily! I beg you and all your barons in God's name, do not give as much as a penny for me. They have burned my legs and I shall never be any use again. The Turks have lashed me onto this horse. There is no point in my living any longer because I can do nothing to help myself.' When they heard this, our leaders felt nothing but anger. They urged their horses forwards to take revenge. However the pagans (greedy and back-stabbing as ever) realised what they were up to, as did Garsion – may God make him suffer! They hastened back through the gate and bolted it behind them, leaving Rainalt outside the walls (may Jesus help him!).³²³ The Christians blew

³²³ The end of the story is not in the *Antioche*, surprisingly given the amount of time devoted to it. However PT, pp. 58–9, the *Estoire de Jérusalem et d'Antioche* (RHC Occ 5,

blasts on their horns and the army of 40,000 prepared to fight. You might have seen our men forming ranks on the bridge and battering on the gate with hefty steel pikes to try and smash it down and splinter it into pieces. But they wasted their effort: there was no point trying, because the whole thing was made of iron and steel and they could not have broken it down even given a whole year. The Turks came up onto the walls, leaning out with their bows of horn and raining arrows and lances down on the Christians. That day saw considerable slaughter amongst our men, with the Turks leaving a good 50 or so dead on the river bank.

187

Let me tell you for certain that, had you been there, you could have said hand on heart that you had never seen anyone behave so nobly. You would have heard them weeping and lamenting for Rainalt. Our barons regrouped and had the [Saracen] kings brought to them.³²⁴ Wicher the Swabian was ordered to chop off their heads; these were catapulted into the city as mangonel ammunition, and the bodies were flung over the walls. The pagans reacted furiously when they saw this. They had the alarm sounded through the city of Antioch and more than 60,000 came running to prepare for battle. They gathered by the gate and unbolted it. There was a great confusion with arrows flying and single combat on every side. Their deadly enemies the Christians were taunting them along the lines that the more Turks came, the more they could behead. They put 15,500 to death. The Saracens realised this could not go on and retreated into the city, barring the gates. All this unnerved them considerably. Even Garsion began to cry out, calling repeatedly on Mohammed and Apollon: ‘Alas! Come and save me, my noble lord sultan!’ Imagine him tearing at his full beard and slamming one fist into the other so hard that the blood ran out from under his fingernails. His son Sansadoine took it on himself to comfort him. ‘My father,’ he said, ‘you are doing yourself no favours by getting so upset. What you should be doing is sending a messenger to your king the sultan.’ When he heard this suggestion Garsion flung his arms round him, cheered considerably by these words.³²⁵ Meanwhile the Franks (Jesus save them!) were in good order. They took off their armour and made straight for their

pp. 623–48), p. 634, and Stephen of Bourbon, *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*, ed. J. Berlioz and J.-L. Eichenlaub (3 vols, Turnhout: Brepols, 2002–2006), vol. 3, pp. 228–9, vv. 469–82, recount his death; the last two sources add the detail that his head was catapulted out of Antioch onto the Christian army, and according to the *Estoire* it was picked up by the bishop of Le Puy, at which it laughed. This would have sat particularly well with what follows in the text, the catapulting of Saracen heads; it also explains the reference to Rainalt being mourned.

³²⁴ It is not clear who these are.

³²⁵ Kemal-al-Din describes Garsion sending two sons as envoys to seek help at the start of the siege (*Chronique d’Alep*, *RHC Or* 3, pp. 571–732, at p. 578); AA is the only

supper. The leaders and peers sat down to eat as night fell and the day ended. Once they had eaten they retired to bed, leaving the count of St-Gilles and his entire household to guard the army through the night.

188

As dawn broke and the light strengthened, the whole army was full of soldiers waking to a new day, on their mettle and doing their utmost to serve God. They prepared breakfast and lit fires, filled with joy at their situation. God bless them! Garsion of Antioch lay around in bed until late. He dressed as Saracens do, with a silk cloak, a surcoat of cloth from Tyre, hose of patterned silk and lily-white headgear. He went to sit at the marble windows [of his palace] and looked out over the Frankish army, too large for him to see all of it at once. He heard mules braying and horses whinnying, hawks shrieking and hounds giving tongue; the field kitchens were smoking and the cauldrons steaming, and pack animals were coming and going between the sea and the camp bringing provisions for the soldiers in the army. Garsion realised beyond a shadow of a doubt that they would not be going anywhere until they had taken Antioch and driven him out and – once they had taken it – killing him in the most painful way possible, skinning his entire household alive and roasting them to a turn. He was so upset at the thought that it nearly drove him mad. He slammed one fist into the other until his joints cracked: ‘Alas, lord Mohammed! I have always served you faithfully, yet now you cannot protect me against the Franks. If I can just hang on until I see the sultan, I shall make you pay for your cowardice!’ His weeping and wailing rose to such a pitch that he was beside himself.

189

Garsion of Antioch was in a terrible state, twisting his hands and tugging at his hair. He had his favourite and most trustworthy followers summoned up to the palace; so many came to assemble that the entire palace was bursting at the seams. Garsion got to his feet and went out among them. Between sobs he addressed them as follows: ‘My lords,’ he said, ‘grant me a moment’s attention. When I was a young man I conquered these lands. In the process I inflicted death and suffering on large numbers of Christians.’³²⁶ Now their sons hate me for it, and I am suffering as a result. I killed their fathers and put them through agonies. But now I am sorry

chronicler to reflect this, although he also has Sansadoine being sent on a mission (pp. 248–9).

³²⁶ Byzantine and Armenian Christians: a rare hint of ecumenicalism from the writer. Revenge for these attacks gives an additional justification for the Crusade, and mirrors the underlying theme of the vengeance of Christ.

for what I made them go through. I expect I shall be killed and dispossessed by their children, and my son Sansadoine declared a prisoner. There they are laying siege all around us with an enormous force, ready to decapitate anyone they catch. So, is there any man among you brave and intrepid enough to go and beg the sultan my emir to come and help me? After all, I hold my land and my entire territories from him, and he is acknowledged as the king and overlord of all of Persia. I promise the man who volunteers to go to him on my behalf that he shall hold his fief in perpetuity; I shall add 1000 marks of gold duly weighed to his income; and he will be my trusted adviser and intimate for the rest of his life.'³²⁷ All the pagans stayed silent, none speaking up. It was his son Sansadoine who went forward and presented himself at the feet of his father. 'My noble father, it is I who will go if you so order. I am your son whom you fathered. You should be able to expect me not to let you down in your hour of need, and as long as I live I shall not do so, by Mohammed.'

'My noble son!' said Garsion. 'Thank you 500 times! May Mohammed my God keep you safe!' He leaned down, overcome by pity and emotion; tears trickled down either side of his nose. He embraced Sansadoine, kissing him over and over, thanking him effusively for agreeing to go as messenger.

190

'You must give this your best shot, my son,' said Garsion. 'You are my son as we all know to be the case, and I have always given you the best upbringing I could. When I was young I conquered this kingdom and the city of Antioch. I slaughtered Christians right, left and centre as I hastened onwards. Now their sons hate me for the death I dealt out, and have put a siege right round my city. Provided they do not take it from me, it will be put in your name and you will get a decent income from the port of St Simeon. That is why it is worth your setting out on this dangerous mission to seek help from my lord the sultan. Make no mistake about it: your quest for the emir ends only when he has heard what you have to say, no matter how bad the rain, the wind and the icy cold. Tell him that, by his god Mohammed, I am asking him to come and help me without delay. The Franks, those inky-black villains, are occupying my lands; they have pitched 100,000 tents, bivouacs, shelters and pavilions all over the place. Godfrey of Bouillon, along with Bohemond, Tancred and the other leaders, is putting us under heavy pressure. Let us warn the sultan solemnly: if once they take Antioch they will come and seek him out in Persia whether he likes it or not; they will make sure they destroy every castle and keep; and they will drag Mohammed out of his city of Mecca. Alas! If they do, miserable wretches, what will become of us?' His

³²⁷ Saracens are portrayed following the behaviour codes of feudal society. Garsion invokes the sultan of Persia as his feudal overlord and the terms on offer reflect a generous settlement.

entourage of lords all replied as one, 'In faith, my lord, let us be honest with you – Sansadoine has good judgement and is extremely shrewd. But have you given any thought to whom we should send to accompany him?'

'The matter has already been decided,' said Garsion. 'Cahus, Lus and Hardron will be companions for Sansadoine, in charge of a retinue of 60 of the best Turks from my household. They will travel secretly at night, like thieves, making every effort not to make any noise or sound. If our arch-enemies the Christians were to find out about them, the entire troop would be put to death and exterminated. May Mohammed watch over them, by his most holy name, and lead them safely to the sultan!'

'We heartily approve,' replied the pagans.

191³²⁸

Garsion of Antioch had his messengers summoned, each clad in silk from Montir.³²⁹ He explained their mission eloquently and at some length. 'Tell my lord from me that he needs to come and see me straight away to help and protect me from the Christians, who are intent on attacking and taking Antioch, conquering our lands and overthrowing our dominion. He needs to help me in Mohammed's name and not let me be shamefully overthrown. After all, Antioch is his city and I am under an obligation to hold it from him.' The messengers replied as was only appropriate: 'My lord, of course we shall tell him that, assuming he is willing to listen. But he will never believe that you might be under siege, or that you might be captured and ill treated when you are safe inside Antioch – just look at the height of the walls. Neither will he believe that the Franks have screwed themselves up to a point where they will dare to come and give battle with you. All this means that you might find yourself standing completely alone. He will not believe a single word, true or false.' Garsion heaved a deep sigh on hearing this and wept miserably, unable to help himself. Then he seized a knife which happened to be lying next to him, gripping it like a man beside himself; he grabbed his beard with his left hand. More than 1000 pagans felt their hearts jump into their mouths.

192

Garsion called for his son Sansadoine and explained to him the message he had composed before having a letter written and sealed. 'My noble son, you are to go to the emir the sultan and give him my greetings and friendship. Say that I need him

³²⁸ The importance of the embassy and the sending of the beard as token are underlined by being recounted three times, each time in a more extreme form: classic *laisses similaires*.

³²⁹ As so often, convenient for the rhyme. For 'paile de Montir' cf. *Maugis d'Aigremont: chanson de geste*, ed. P. Vernay (Berne, 1980), v. 6104.

and all his nobles to come to my assistance, because there is not a single Frank left in Christendom: every last one has taken ship for here. They have conquered land eight days' travel in extent. And they have laid siege to the superb city of Antioch. Let him labour under no illusion: if he does not help me, the Franks will seek him out in his kingdom of Persia. They will leave no castle or fortress standing. They will fight their way through to the town of Mecca and drag out Mohammed – they have made their intentions quite clear – and take the two candelabra which burn there to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem to present to their God Jesus. If he is reluctant to believe the message you bring on my behalf, present him with this – one side of my beard.³³⁰ He gripped the razor-sharp knife he was holding and sliced off the mass of his beard. This was something he would rather not have done even for 1000 marks of gold properly weighed; defying Mohammed would have been preferable. Sansadoine burst into tears at the sight, desperately upset.

193

'My noble son,' said Garsion, 'you absolutely must go to the emir sultan and seek his help. As soon as you see him, tell my lord from me that the Franks have besieged me and will not give up until they have flattened the walls of Antioch. My lord needs to come to my aid with his forces from Baghdad. He should bring with him King Sublicamas, the Red Lion known as Satanas, the apostolic caliph and Judas his brother, and a minimum of 100,000 troops.³³¹ You will take the portion of my beard with you. These are the signs you will show him: once the king sees them he will realise that we are not playing games. On top of this sign here is another for you to give him.' He asked for a razor that Conras gave him. Pulling the blade out of its case, he shaved off the other side of his beard and gave it to Jonas complete with skin and flesh. He would rather not have done this for all the gold in Damascus; indeed he would rather have seen Antioch and its walls flattened.³³² His blood flowed down and soaked his clothes. Sansadoine watched, exclaiming in horror. 'You have done yourself irreparable damage,' he said, 'you have cut too close to the bone.'

³³⁰ In a pre-literate society it was common to send a token as a guarantee of the authenticity of the message. See M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1993), pp. 254–60.

³³¹ Sublicamas is not attested elsewhere. The Rouge Lion, who despite his Disneyesque name is a major Saracen leader, also appears in the *Jérusalem*, and his son in *Baudouin de Sebourg – Li romans de Baudouin de Sebourg*, ed. L.N. Boca (2 vols, Valenciennes, 1841). AA refers to a Rosseleon as one of the four deputy rulers of Antioch (pp. 196–7; pp. 326–7).

³³² In which case this is a singularly pointless gesture.

194

Garsion of Antioch cut off his beard. He held it in his fist, looking fixedly at it; then he handed it over to his son Sansadoine to take. Sansadoine wrapped it up in a piece of silk and stuffed it down his trousers; it would stay there until it was presented to the sultan. The tiled chamber was the scene of great if discreet lamentation.³³³ Day ended and evening came. The messengers prepared to set out on their journey.

195

So night came and the day was at an end. The messengers turned and left, each ready to go. Sansadoine put on his armour and took up his weapons. He put on a mailshirt that was picked out in gold; he laced on a green-sheened helmet that was a work of art, the headband of gold delicately worked in niello.³³⁴ Then he buckled his sword to his left side: it was several feet long and had a very wide blade, a full palm and three thumbs' worth. He made sure to have his quiver and bow with him, which had proved fatal to many Christians killed and injured by them. His warhorse was led up to him: it was tall and strong and fast and its name was Baiars.³³⁵ Nobody had ever yet been able to tire it or exhaust it; there had never been such a horse in all pagandom. Sansadoine swung proudly into the saddle. He was an exceptional specimen: had he been a Christian he could have inflicted serious damage on ten Turks by his charge on the battlefield.³³⁶ Now listen to the wicked plans hatched by the messengers. They were extremely concerned about the Franks bivouacked in their quarters and their tents. So when the 60 of them mounted their horses, they were too cowardly to come riding out side by side from one gate: they sneakily opened several gates instead.³³⁷ The heroic Sansadoine, shrewd and strong, slipped out among them from one of the postern gates, accompanied by 30 Turks whom he particularly esteemed. 'Go out over this bridge,' he commanded the others. They all did as commanded: picture them riding past and away. They passed so close to the [Christian] army that they

³³³ 'Pavé' refers to a ceramic tiled floor. The Château de Suscinio in Brittany preserves an extensive example of such flooring from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, elaborately decorated with grotesques, foliage scrollwork and imaginary scenes, and Byland Abbey, Yorks., preserves extensive areas of geometric patterning.

³³⁴ A technique of inlaying enamel.

³³⁵ Baiars is a common name for warhorses: see *Dramatis personae*.

³³⁶ Classic sentiment in the *chanson de geste*: compare *Roland*, v. 899, on the emir of Balaguer, 'fust chrestiens, asez oust barnét' ('he would have been a noble lord had he been a Christian').

³³⁷ Clearly seen as an underhand tactic, although to the modern reader it seems like simple common sense.

could see the tents quite clearly. They rode in tight ranks, not uttering a word. Their helmets shone, reflecting a great deal of light. That night it was Tancred's household that was on watch, reinforced by a fair number of warriors from other territories. Count Rotrou of Perche, a brave and experienced soldier, was well liked by Tancred and among his intimates. When they saw the Turks leaving the city, they rode up a narrow defile where there was a slender bridge across a shallow part of the river, leaving 100 knights in front of the gate. Then they unleashed a charge on the Turks, yelling as they came: they routed them, killing and slashing them so effectively that not a single one made it back into the city. Shouts went up at the killing of the Turks. Enguerrand of St-Pol heard them clearly, leapt to his feet (he was already armed) and said to his companions, 'Come on, my lords! The army is engaged in battle: we should not waste any time.'³³⁸ With these words he swung into the saddle, his shield slung round his neck, and galloped off at top speed. He was followed by his companions, by whom he was well liked. Listen to this exploit: there has never been another one like it. Enguerrand swung round to the right of Antioch and found the pagans near a hill away from the army. He shouted to his companions, addressing them in these terms: 'My lords, look over here! Pagans! Make sure you give them a hard time!' When the Turks looked and caught sight of our men, not even the bravest of them would have stayed there for 1000 marks of weighed gold: each one slackened the reins and wheeled about, and they turned and fled not caring where, aiming only to avoid being killed. Our men chased them, giving their horses their heads, and followed the pagans until the end of the day.

196

Day broke and the light grew. The Franks caught up with the pagans in a wide valley. Enguerrand of St-Pol gave his horse its head and made for a Turk whom he struck on his quartered shield. He struck the golden boss full on, splintering and piercing it; he tore through the links of the mail-shirt on the Saracen's back and thrust the steel right through his heart, knocking him dead from his horse right in front of him in the path. Sansadoine was beside himself at the sight. He grabbed his bow of horn, determined to seek revenge, and took an arrow made of applewood with a good sharp point: he had taken pains to have it sharpened carefully. He shot it at the warlike Enguerrand of St-Pol. It struck his shield and his double-layered hauberk but slipped down his side. God was protecting Enguerrand and ensured it did not penetrate his flesh: if it had wounded him he would have had no chance of avoiding death.³³⁹ The noble pulled out his elmwood pommel sword and made for the Saracen; however, he could not catch him because his horse galloped faster

³³⁸ Even though Rotrou is on watch, it is a St-Pol who rides to the rescue.

³³⁹ Divine intervention shows approbation not only for the Crusade but for Enguerrand.

than a sparrowhawk can fly. 'Go on then, you villain,' he said, 'and I hope God makes your life a misery!' He chased after another Turk intent on killing him: he cut off his head complete with its enamelled helmet. Our other fighters were no more inclined to hang back: they left 14 Turkish steeds riderless. At that point fog began to swirl and thicken, and that proved the salvation of the greedy double-dealing Turks.

197

Sansadoine was upset at the losses inflicted on his men. He swore by Mohammed, maker of sky and clouds, that he would rather be killed with a sharp sword than have to face up to another discreditable episode with the Franks. He led his men away without turning to left or right, while our men rode back, God help them! They carried off the pagans with them on horseback and made for their encampment without drawing rein.

198

Our men came back, may Jesus save them! They brought the Turks all the way into the camp. Sansadoine [meanwhile] sent a pagan to report back to his father Garsion that he was on his way to Persia with his message, unharmed and in good spirits. Our leaders collected the dead pagans together to show our men, to their great delight. They cut off the pagans' heads, rammed them onto poles, and planted them everywhere in the fields [surrounding the city].³⁴⁰ When Garsion of Antioch got up the next morning and went to lean on the marble windowsill, he began to look out over the Christian army and caught sight of the Turkish heads. He flew into a rage and was so upset that he was beside himself. He was convinced that his beloved son had been killed. Imagine the king weeping and wailing, wringing his white hands and pulling at his hair, banging and slamming one fist into the other. 'Alas, miserable wretch that I am! How can I bear to carry on like this! Alas! Lord Mohammed, how can you forget me in this way! You must be asleep and unable to rouse yourself. Let me tell you in no uncertain terms – if you do not wake up I am going to put a stake right through your head and smash it into little pieces.' If you ask me he was on the verge of going mad when he saw a messenger coming into the palace who could tell him the actual state of affairs.

³⁴⁰ A detail also in GN, p. 84.

199

The messenger came into the royal palace and stood on a dais in front of Garsion. He gave him a bulletin on his brave son: he was safe and sound and had not been hurt, and was making straight for Coroscane to see the emir sultan to seek help; he would bring back reinforcements such as the world had never seen before. 'The message he was very keen I should bring back to you is that you should do your best to protect the royal palace, the town and the Iron Bridge. Think of Antioch: that is all he asks of you. Before a month has passed you can rest assured that he shall bring you comprehensive reinforcements. There will be 30 eminent crowned kings, and you will see that whole mountain and plain swarming with troops. There is no way those Frankish bastards will be able to escape.' When he heard this Garsion leapt onto a bench shouting at the top of his voice: 'Come on, men! Let's party! It's time for a celebratory dance or two! I don't give a fig for the Christians!'

200

'Cheer up, men,' said Garsion, 'in the name of Mohammed, I really could not care less about the Franks.' Now let me tell you about the messengers riding on their mission. The noble Sansadoine was very downcast; with the few remaining Turks he spurred at top speed all the way across the desert, galloping up hill and down dale. They made a beeline for Aleppo, where Ridwan was. They dismounted in the courtyard of the main palace. More than 60 Turks came out to meet them, the king at their head to speak with them. He asked, 'How are things with you, my noble nephew?'

'Well and ill, by my head, noble uncle. Those filthy cowards the Franks have laid siege to us. So many have come to Antioch that there is not as much as a lance's length of land unoccupied. They intend to leave us not a glove's worth of our kingdom – and when they have finished there they will push on further, not stopping until they have gone all the way to the Orient. That is why I have come to seek help from the emir sultan.' Ridwan replied, 'Stay here awhile, my noble nephew. Your horses are completely blown and exhausted. When dawn breaks tomorrow you shall have your pick from a large selection of fast horses: you are at liberty to choose the best and will find even the slowest faster than you can handle.' They asked for water and sat down straight away; they were entertained as well as they could have wished. The following day they rose at crack of dawn. Swift warhorses were led up to them; they left their own horses behind and mounted these instead. Sansadoine rode his favourite Baiars.³⁴¹ They passed towering

³⁴¹ It was explained in *laisse* 195 that Baiars could not be tired by any means.

Tornalcele to the right and Suhakainargant to the left.³⁴² They passed the strongly flowing Euphrates: this is one of God's favourite rivers that flows (as we read) all the way from Paradise, the same from which God drove Adam out and where our Lord God baptized St John the Baptist.³⁴³ They left it behind them and reached the river Carant.³⁴⁴ They did not take the most direct road, going instead up hill and down dale and through deep valleys furrowed with ravines, desperately anxious. To cut a long story short, it took them 29 days from leaving the great city of Antioch to arriving at the silver bridge.³⁴⁵ They found the emir below Sarmazane; he had left his army on the hills of Bocidant.³⁴⁶ Below Sarmazane was a lush orchard of very fragrant cypresses and bay trees; it was in truth full of every type of rare grafted stock, and the birds sang joyfully and showily. The sultan had his tent and accommodation pitched there. Turks had come from all parts of the East expecting to see Mohammed accomplish marvels. That was where the messengers dismounted, shattered and dripping with sweat. The news they were about to give the Turks would give pause for thought.

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Below Sarmazane there was a very well-stocked orchard, full of cypresses, laurels and olive trees and dripping with balm from the balsam trees. That was where the noble sultan had his pavilion erected. All the stakes were of elmwood and silver. The panels were of quartered silk: some were green with a check pattern, most were yellow, which was highly prized; and some were indigo to set off the others; the remainder were as white as apple blossom. The whole thing was edged with 1000 borders; each one was more than a quarter composed of precious stones chosen by Caesar and his brother Augobier.³⁴⁷ A good 20,000 Turks could shelter

³⁴² Places not identified (possibly fictional). Langlois suggests Torvaucele as a variant for Turbessel (p. 647, n. 2).

³⁴³ A double misconception: John baptized Jesus in the river Jordan, not the Euphrates.

³⁴⁴ Possibly the Khābūr, a major tributary of the Euphrates, but it is pointless to expect accurate topographical knowledge. See Introduction, chapter 3.

³⁴⁵ The description of the Saracen camp which follows recurs in near-identical form in the *Chanson de Jérusalem*, vv. 3967–71.

³⁴⁶ Sarmazane: in AA Samarthan; in the *Chétifs* Sormasane. Myers suggested this was Hamadhān, the sultan's capital (*Chétifs*, Introduction, p. xxiv), or it may be Ḥṣāfāhān, which had been the fabulously wealthy capital of Malik-Shāh. PT lists 'Gorbandus impius de Samarzana' as one of the 75 legendary kings of Antioch (pp. 97–8). Bocidant is referred to elsewhere as a Saracen land: *La Chevalerie d'Ogier de Danemarche*, ed. Mario Eusebi (Milan, 1963), v. 9699.

³⁴⁷ For references to Aucibier see Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 561–2. Cesaire is in the *Enfances Vivien*, ed. M. Rouquier (Geneva, 1997), v. 1878.

underneath.³⁴⁸ The sultan had a devil put on the topmost point of the tent: it was made entirely of gold and silver cunningly worked. Let me tell you that it was without any shadow of a doubt the most amazing image anyone could wish to see: it was tall and shapely with a proud expression.³⁴⁹ The emir sultan had it lowered to the ground and 14 Arab kings ran to embrace it. They had him raised above four magnets and set up so that he cannot bend or tip in any direction. Mohammed was up in the air and began to spin round, thanks to a fan pushing him round.³⁵⁰ At this you might have seen the kings fall to their knees on the ground, offering rich gifts to him and kissing his feet; and you might have heard adoration and prayer from 1000 sides.

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Mohammed was held up in the air by magnetic forces while the pagans bowed down to worship and adore him, offering gold, silver, silk and rich fabrics. It was at this point in the ceremonies that you should imagine the messengers arriving. Sansadoine reacted angrily when he saw the goings-on. His first words to them all were: 'Greetings three times over. Just what do you think you are doing, you stupid idiots? As far as I can see you have lost your minds. Why on earth are you worshipping this piece of wood? Let me tell you that Mohammed is not worth as much as a couple of straws. My mistake was to believe in him and I have lost

³⁴⁸ Compare the more detailed description in *Jérusalem* (vv. 6088–172); *Canso* repeats the comment about the number of knights who could squeeze in (vv. 294–315). Tents provide a good opportunity for the author to invoke Saracen wealth and luxury. See also AA for a quarrel between Bohemond and Godfrey over the gift of a tent (pp. 262–3), and for a description of a tent (pp. 336–7); RC chapter 18 for Tancred asking for a magnificent tent from Alexius (pp. 42–3), corroborated by AC (p. 340).

³⁴⁹ Such descriptions of Saracen idols are common in the *chanson de geste*: see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 387–98 and compare *Roland*, vv. 853–4; *La Chanson d'Aspremont*, ed. L. Brandin, 2nd edn (2 vols, Paris, 1970), vv. 2980–84. There are of course no images in Islam. Bancourt suggests the descriptions may contain some memory of antique statues such as the Hercules of Cadiz. Elaborate statues and automata existed at the Byzantine court: see Liutprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, trans. F. A. Wright (London, 1993), p. 153. Nearer to home golden images of saints were found in churches such as the reliquaries of Ste Foy at Conques and St Baudime at St-Nectaire.

³⁵⁰ See note to laisse 157. The description of magnetic levitation is accurate: four magnets and rotation would be needed to ensure the image remained airborne. For a similar description cf. *De septem mundi miraculis manu hominum factis*, previously attributed to Bede, which describes an iron statue of Bellerophon and his horse held up by magnets: C. W. Jones, *Beda's Pseudepigrapha: Scientific Writings Falsely Attributed to Bede* (Ithaca, NY, 1939), p. 89. The phenomenon is known as a levitron and was only patented in the 1970s. We thank Prof. Chris Foot for advice on magnetic levitation, something well outside our experience as medievalists.

my men as a result. If you trust me, you will beat him so hard with a stick that he will never be taken for a god again.' He raised his heavy muscled fist and struck Mohammed so hard on the neck that he fell full length. Watched by 1000 of his followers, he mounted the idol's stomach. A massive outcry went up from the pagans at this, and they showered him with long viciously sharp darts. The sultan shouted out: 'Hang him right away!' And he would have been hanged then and there if he had not been recognised in the nick of time.

203

Sansadoine was beside himself with rage. He struck Mohammed so hard that the idol fell down, and stamped on its stomach as he would have trampled a dog.³⁵¹ The pagans were furious at the sight, and flung blades and missiles with handles at him. The sultan shouted to them to take him away to be hanged, then had a last-minute change of heart. 'In God's name,' the sultan asked, 'what is your parentage?'

'My lord, I come from Antioch. I am the eldest son of Garsion.'

'My friend, I know just who you are. Tell me what it is you want. Are you in serious difficulties? You seem very perturbed.'

'I most certainly am, by Mohammed, my lord! Things have never been worse. All Christendom has made its way to our land. They have laid siege the length and breadth of Antioch; they have seized our ports, our bridges and our fords so that we can no longer get supplies of bread, wine or corn; we have lost all our woodlands and fields. Some of the Franks have shields that are so wide that three of ours could fit into them, and all of them have swords with hilts in the shape of a cross just like their God who was hanged on the Cross; some of them carry bows and feathered bolts that they have used to kill and injure large numbers of our men; others carry lances with razor-sharp blades. When we see them drawn up ready for battle, we find ourselves unable to make even one of them flinch; one of them would be a match for four of our soldiers.'

'On my head,' said the sultan, 'you are in a dreadful state. You must have had a terrible fright to make you look so pale.'

'No,' Corbaran intervened, 'actually he's had too much to drink.'³⁵²

'Yes,' said the emir, 'and it's gone to his head. It's hardly surprising he is drunk.' At this Sansadoine was almost beside himself and spoke to them in terms they could not ignore.³⁵³ 'Emir of Persia, on my head, you are making a terrible mistake. I am not talking drunken nonsense and it is wrong of you to say I am. King Garsion is sending you a request for help. My name is Sansadoine and I am

³⁵¹ Offensive to Muslims.

³⁵² The writer traduces Islam again: drinking alcohol is forbidden. See Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 443–5.

³⁵³ In AA it is Soliman who brings this warning, bringing letters from Garsion (pp.248–51). Here there is no question of letters: the beard is the token.

his son. If you still do not believe the case, let me show you evidence you cannot ignore.' Without further ado he reached into his hose and pulled out the beard, its hair matted and tangled. He gave it to the royal sultan with all his followers looking on. The emir spread it out, and realised beyond a shadow of a doubt that Garsion had shaved it from his own chin. He was horrorstruck and deeply upset. He announced to his men: 'Let us turn our thoughts to providing help. This is a genuine sign that is to be taken with all possible seriousness. If he cut off his beard, he must have been in deadly earnest.' All the pagans stopped talking and there was a deathly silence.

204

When Sansadoine had got the pagans so anxious that not one of them dared utter a single word or say anything, he rose to his feet with a triumphant expression. 'My lord emir,' he said, 'this is not a trick and I am not joking. The Christians have laid siege to my father in Antioch, and let me swear to you in good faith that if they take it by force they will come looking for you in the beautiful land of Baldorie.'³⁵⁴ They will leave no tower or vaulted palace intact. They will smash down the walls and palisades of Mecca; they will drag Mohammed off the pedestal where he resides and seize the two candelabra standing there, which they will carry off to the Sepulchre where their God rose from the dead. And if they do you will suffer terrible consequences. You will have no choice but to flee as wretched exiles; our religion will be overturned and destroyed for ever.' At this the Saracens became very pensive; even the bravest amongst them was disconcerted.

205

When the Saracens heard this news, even the bravest among them was given pause for thought. The emir sultan changed colour, but before long flew into the greatest rage possible. From beneath an olive tree he glanced down into the valley, and saw [there] 40 Turks dismount, howling and insulting Mohammed and Tervagant.'³⁵⁵ 'Alas! Miserable wretches that we are, however can we survive when the Christians are determined to overthrow us in shame!' They were so overcome with their wounds that they fainted away. However Soliman of Nicaea made it his business

³⁵⁴ A synonym for Baghdad: Moisan, vol. 2, p. 1046.

³⁵⁵ These are the remnants of Soliman's forces from Nicaea, fresh from their defeat by the Christians. The chronology is shaky: the defeat at Nicaea was in June 1097 and we are now some time in spring 1098. Dramatically, however, their arrival reinforces Sansadoine's message to the sultan. Rather confusingly Soliman is already with the sultan at Antioch and has been for some time (vv. 2705, 2809): his arrival here reflects both the source material as in AA and the desire of the author not to let logic spoil a good scene.

to offer them comfort; [then] turning his horse, he gave it its head. The sultan saw the new arrivals: his head began to jerk and he gripped a stick so hard that he snapped it. Now he will hear in person news that will give him something to fear.

206

The sultan looked beneath the olive tree in the meadow and saw the Turks dismounting from their broken-down horses. Out of the 40 each one of them was covered with blood; there was not a single one who had not had a foot or hand cut off, lost one eye or been blinded in both, or without a gaping hole in his nose or lower lip; you will never have seen people more hideously disfigured. All their horses were dropping with fatigue. Soliman had brought them with him from Nicaea, where he had been overcome and soundly defeated. Once he had dismounted under the branches of the olive tree and flung his mailed hood back from his head, he tugged at his beard pulling out 100 hairs. He looked every inch an extremely angry man. He stomped into the pavilion in the grip of emotion and, shouldering the crowds aside, marched straight up to where he could see the sultan. He flung himself at his feet. The royal king Margos promptly pulled him up; he was a Saracen more than 100 years old, who recognised Soliman from his face, his grizzled hair and a small scar on his nose. The sultan asked him: 'Soliman, what is your purpose here? This time you have come virtually alone and looking defeated. You used to come to my court covered with ornaments, bringing with you 10,000 armed Turks and all equipped and ready to do me service. Now all you have with you is 30 [sic] human wrecks looking for all the world like mule-drivers, and you yourself are as white as a sheet. Tell me who has done this to you; don't keep anything back. In Mohammed's name, be sure that you will be avenged.'

'My lord,' said Soliman, 'may I offer you my thanks 500 times over. But I am worried, my noble lord, that you will not keep your resolve. Never mind: I shall tell you what has happened since you are keen to hear.'

207

'My lord,' said Soliman, 'I shall be honest with you. The Christians have seized my fief and my lands. They sailed to Rum in ships and galleys.³⁵⁶ You have never seen or heard of such a large army as came to take up residence on the fields of Rum; no man would be capable of counting them even if his life depended on it. Anyone who saw how they laid siege to Nicaea, my strong and well-prepared city, and how ferocious they were would not give as much as a rotten apple for infidels. They conquered my city and the mosque [known as] La Mahomerie; they seized my palace; they dishonoured my wife and I think they have cut off my son's head;

³⁵⁶ Rum is Asia Minor, the territory of Soliman around Iconium (modern Konya).

the emperor and his knights are now ensconced in my extensive palace with its massive stone walls.³⁵⁷ I am so distraught and furious that words fail me. But, by Mohammed my god whom I adore and invoke, if you do not give me your support and help I shall kill myself on the spot with my burnished sword or go and drown myself in the waters of Nubia.' The Saracens whispered to each other, 'By Mohammed my God, [Garsion's] firstborn is not making things up.'

208

Corbaran of Oliferne, the sultan's seneschal for the entire kingdom, was the first to speak up. 'By my god Mohammed who makes the wheat grow, I am amazed to hear about these people and how they have taken Soliman's city. I know for a fact that I killed 30,000 of them back on the steep slopes of the mountain at Civetot.'³⁵⁸ Every last one had his head cut off. I never thought to see them back for another fight in my lifetime.'

'My lord,' said Soliman, 'have you taken leave of your senses? The ones you met were broken-down wrecks, wretches in poor condition, gathered together from heaven knows where, swollen [with hunger], gaunt, wretched, on their last legs and nothing but skin and bone.'³⁵⁹ They were followers of Lord Peter the bearded, the one whose beard reaches all the way down to the fastening of his baldric. Payback time has come. What we are faced with now is the flower of Christianity, the best knights there are ever likely to be. Emir of Persia, I am not exaggerating when I say that amongst all chivalry the Franks are the most renowned.'

209

Soliman of Nicaea replied: 'Emir of Persia, by my god Mohammed, let me tell you the honest truth. If you had been in my well-garrisoned city, you would have seen abundant [Christian] forces of the highest quality, 60,000 altogether in one company. They were out in front, armed and raring to go. Each had a broad shield and a long burnished lance; every single one had a broad sword with a cross on it that could cut better than a scythe sharpened by the blacksmith. When they strike one of our men he has no chance of survival; soul and body are separated so cleanly that he does not feel a thing. When I saw that these were the sort of people

³⁵⁷ Although Nicaea surrendered to the Byzantines, the emperor was not present and did not take up residence in the palace there.

³⁵⁸ This refers to the attack on Peter the Hermit at Civetot with which the *Antioche* opens. It was not the historical Kerbogha who inflicted this defeat but 'Soliman' (Qilij Arslan).

³⁵⁹ This justifies the fact that the first encounter with the Saracens on the Crusade ended in defeat.

who had seized my territory, I did not go scurrying to send to Coroscane for help in case, my lord, you thought me a coward. Instead I assembled my own forces. When fully massed there were a good 900,000. We went out to meet them in the valley of Gurhenie and made for their camp.³⁶⁰ That turned out to be a tactical error. Our aim had been to teach the Christians a lesson by launching a full-scale assault with Turkish bows. But the Franks showed great bravery in return. That day they carried out a strange manoeuvre by splitting their army into two halves and making two separate columns: that was extremely cunning of them. The brave-faced Godfrey was in one along with a bishop of Le Puy (Mohammed's curse on him!), the Count Hugh of Vermandois who was their leader and captain, as well as Count Eustache and Raymond of St-Gilles, Wicher the Swabian, Robert of Normandy and the Count Baldwin who went on to take Edessa. All these fell on us, each with his lance lowered for attack. Had you been there you would have heard 1000 horns blowing at full blast, shouts and yells and a massive attack swarming over mountains and hills and valleys. The earth was a-glitter with the Frankish arms. Huge numbers of lances were shattered, shields splintered to pieces, and high-quality hauberks smashed and ripped apart: the noise of it all could be heard from easily five leagues off. The earth was strewn with the corpses of our men. We simply could not withstand that kind of bloodbath. We turned tail and ran, suffering terrible losses. The Franks followed us for a good day and a half, pursuing our men for a good 30 leagues. Not one of our men could have avoided losing his life by then – I am quite sure all of them would have died without a doubt – had not my lord Mohammed come to our assistance.'

'That remains to be seen,' said the sultan of Persia.

210

Soliman of Nicaea said: 'Emir, listen to us. If I did not tell you this, you would find it out anyway. Out in front of the Christians were four soldiers on their own. One was St Demetrius with the brave St Denis; another was the immensely valiant St George; and the fourth was St Michael, who was in charge of them.'³⁶¹ They are deadly enemies of our men, let me make that totally clear, and resolutely determined to destroy pagans. They chased all of us over the grassland for 34 leagues. All of

³⁶⁰ This is a reprise of the battle of Dorylaeum described in *laisses* 89–100. There is confusion: Soliman suggests that Dorylaeum was intended to divert the Christians from taking Nicaea, when in fact they had already taken Nicaea.

³⁶¹ A further reference to the celestial help attested in the sources (later) at the battle of Antioch, e.g. *GF*, p. 69. Here they are invoked at Dorylaeum, something not in the sources but which creates dramatic effect and underlines divine approval of the Christian cause. See v. 2179 for intervention at Dorylaeum by Sts George and Demetrius: Sts Denis and Michael are not mentioned at that point.

us would have had our heads chopped off had it not been for Mohammed, ruler of the whole world, and red-headed Soliman would never have seen you again.'

211

'Emir of Persia,' said King Soliman, 'I shall tell you the exact truth and you'd better believe it. If you had been in the fields and waste land surrounding Nicaea, you would have seen for yourself countless brave Christians; countless hauberks and countless glittering gold helmets; countless immensely wide shields with bucklers; countless impressive warhorses, bay and sorrel and piebald; countless impressive silk banners billowing out; countless impressive swords and countless sharp spears. They took my city. I am in the depths of despair. They deprived me of my wife and both my children. I shall never recover in my lifetime. My lord, do not taunt me because I fled. I beg you here and now to come to my assistance and avenge me for my shameful defeat by these filthy Franks. And you can believe me when I say that if you do not help me, by Mohammed my god whom I bow down to, I shall leave first thing in the morning and you will never see me again as long as I live. I would rather be dead than live as a defeated coward!'

'My friend,' said the sultan, 'you shall have your help. But please shut up and listen to what I have to say: it would be in your interest to do so. Firstly we shall go and help the brave Garsion. Don't get upset about it and start worrying: you shall ride in the army with me and I shall add 100 castles to your fief.'

'I am deeply grateful, my lord,' said Soliman. 'I shall do as you wish, listen to what you say and follow your commands.'

212

Soliman of Nicaea finished his speech. The Saracens and pagans had listened with close attention, uttering not a word and with their heads bent. Then Brohadas rose to his feet and pushed his way through the crowd: he was the sultan of Persia's son by his senior wife.³⁶² He called out to his father at the top of his voice: 'It was you who knighted me, my lord, as we all know, below Carsane in the paved chamber.³⁶³ In front of 100,000 Turks you buckled onto me a sword that was the noblest weapon ever to have existed anywhere. I am only sorry that I haven't yet

³⁶² As analysed by Duparc-Quioic (*Etude*, p. 106), the unhistorical Brohadas is the character who knits together the three central texts of the Cycle: the *Antioche*, the *Chétifs* and the *Jérusalem*. He is killed in the battle of Antioch; the sultan challenges Corbaran, charged with keeping him safe, to a judicial duel which Richard de Caumont fights and wins for him in the *Chétifs*.

³⁶³ Carsane is a version of Khurasan: see A. V. Murray, 'Coroscane: Homeland of the Saracens in the *chansons de geste* and the historiography of the crusades', in Hans van

shown it off to the Franks so I can blood it, dyeing it with the blood from their bodies. I shall never rest easy until they have paid its worth. Corbaran is standing guard over all our lands: order your men to the frozen sea³⁶⁴ and let us ride there in force without further ado. Corbaran can guide me through plains and valleys until we reach the fields surrounding Antioch. Any of those filthy Franks we manage to find will have a heavy chain put round his neck, and I shall bring them to you in the wide expanses of Baldorie. They can put your uncultivated land back to rights – it hasn't been worked for at least a century. As for Bohemond, he shall have his head cut off unless he should decide to follow our ways, become a Turk and convert to our religion: once his religion has been overthrown I shall make him my brother and he will get half of all Persia or, if he would rather, all of Coroscane.' All the Turks roared with laughter at these words: it was a quip that would come back to haunt them in unhappier circumstances.

213

King Hangosion was the first to reply. 'By Mohammed,' he said to the emir sultan, 'you shouldn't demoralise your men like this – you should cheer them all up by telling them they are brave at heart. Get your letters written without wasting time; send your envoys out all the way to the East, including the supreme power the caliph at Baghdad down in its steep-sided valley: his dominions extend all the way to the setting sun. Give instructions for your Turks to go all the way to the ends of the earth. They can all lodge beneath Coronde and wait there until you come out to lead them.'

'That is an attractive proposition,' said the emir. He had his letters written by a clerk called Rubiant. It took a good 400 couriers to carry the letters with the emir's seal. As far as I know, they were spreading the word persuasively in 50 different languages before the month was out.

214

The royal sultan of Persia did not hang about but sent his letters straight to Baghdad. He asked the apostolic caliph to come with all possible speed.³⁶⁵ and so

Dik and Willem Noomen (eds), *Aspects de l'épopée romane: Mentalités – Idéologies – Intertextualités* (Groningen, 1995), pp. 177–84; Moisan, vol. 2, p. 1096.

³⁶⁴ 'La mer Betee' is unlikely to be literally icy; given the writer's vagueness about geography, it could refer to the Dead Sea. For la Mer Betée as the Arctic Ocean, see Moisan, vol. 2, p. 1062. Here it is likely to portray Saracen exoticism, regardless of realism: Péron, pp. 155–6.

³⁶⁵ The 'apostolic caliph' is envisaged as an Islamic equivalent of the pope of Christendom: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 458–63.

he did, with as many people as he had, and joined his forces with the emir sultan at Coronde. That was where they assembled forces from all sides, everyone doing his level best: the [Saracen] pope swore that he was quite sure their God, Mohammed, would stage a huge *pardon*.³⁶⁶

215

So the sultan had written all his letters and instructions, and sent his messengers to every corner of his land. The very first people summoned were the Arabs. God has cursed these people because they do not believe that He died and rose again or that He came back to life in the Holy Sepulchre. By God! What valuable horses they brought with them – swift-running, each one strong and courageous. By God! They will pose a challenge to our noble soldiers, who are repeatedly fighting off the people of the Antichrist in the shadow of the massive walls of Antioch.

216

The next to be summoned by the sultan was King Sublicanas and the Red Lion known as Sathanas.³⁶⁷ They brought a force of 400,000 Turks. These were encamped alongside the forces of the so-called apostolic caliph beneath Coronde, which lies this side of Baghdad. That would be the site of the great *pardon* of Mohammed: its importance could not be exaggerated. They would hear there when the sultan would set out to join the army under the towering ramparts of Antioch.

217

The next to be summoned by the sultan was King Sucaman, in whose domain the city of Jerusalem lay. He had expelled the emir Auffrican from it, the first cousin of King Cornumarant.³⁶⁸ He had brought a Syrian force of a good 100,000 heavy-duty troops, each one armed as you would expect of a pagan. They came to the council beneath Coronde to join the assembly where the apostolic caliph had King Tervagant under control, because Mohammed was to carry out a great and resounding *pardon*.

³⁶⁶ A *pardon* is a religious festival held to commemorate a local saint: still common in France, particularly in Brittany, e.g. at Ste-Anne d'Auray. There is no exact English equivalent and we have retained the French word.

³⁶⁷ The Red Lion is here confusingly also called Sathanas; the idol at laisses 222–23 is also called Satanas.

³⁶⁸ Auffrican is African. There is a Cornumaran in the *Jérusalem*, though it is not clear whether he is the same as the Cornumarant here.

218

The emir of Persia sent out his letters, all the way up through the right hand side of the kingdom to the East. There is a large expanse of land there where the sun rises, and out of it came an extremely valiant set of people. The only white part of their bodies is their eyes and their teeth;³⁶⁹ each carries a sword with a smooth razor-sharp edge of green-sheened steel, the blades being so fine that God never made a weapon which could be a match for them: anyone they take on ends up being cut in two.³⁷⁰ Along with them came Corbaran's mother.³⁷¹ She was old and bristle-haired. She was also very skilled in the arts [of magic]. She knew more about the sun, the moon and the wheeling stars, the sky, the ether and thunder than either Morgan la Fée or her brother Morghant ever knew.³⁷² She was at least 140 years old. She had cast the signs on an island below a cliff, and their prediction was that the Christians would come out as the victors. She was desperate to tell her son Corbaran in the hope he would turn back, but he was having none of it. She came down the hill outside Coronde; there was hair coming out of her ears, her eyelashes were long and straggly and her hair iron-grey. She was called Calabra; she was the daughter of Rubiant who used to control the lands both sides of the mountain.³⁷³ She came to the assembly where the apostolic caliph was holding his great discussion, cackling with laughter.

219

The emir sultan did not hang about. He sent a messenger straight to Mecca where there were three kings, all brothers and extremely proud.³⁷⁴ The emir summoned them under threat of losing their heads to come to him with all the force they could muster, and cart Mohammed along with them. The kings replied that they would come without further ado. They issued instructions to their people and their proud empire; provisions were parcelled up and loaded on packhorses, and they carefully packed in preparation for the journey.

³⁶⁹ Same line in *Jérusalem*, v. 7512.

³⁷⁰ This partly resembles the striking description of the Aguilani at *GF*, p. 49, and its related texts: *GN*, p. 94; *BB*, p. 60; *RM*, p. 150. See also *Canso* which says, however, that these warriors knew little about arms (vv. 316–24, 570–76).

³⁷¹ For Corbaran's mother's previous appearance, see *laisse* 32.

³⁷² The Morgan la Fée of Arthurian romance, half-sister to Arthur and lady in waiting to Guinevere; she learnt magic from Merlin and fell in love with and captured Lancelot. A brother Morghant is not found in the extant versions.

³⁷³ Common Saracen name: the clerk at *laisse* 213 is also called Rubiant.

³⁷⁴ Fictional, so far as can be established. For other brother kings see Marco Polo, who refers to five brothers (four in one version) who are kings of India: *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. R. E. Latham (Harmondsworth, 1958), p. 233.

220

These three kings of the city of Mecca set out just as they had promised the emir. With them they brought their god Mohammed, riding on an elephant with a silken cloth providing a canopy over his head: they carried out their promise exactly as they had said.³⁷⁵ They packed up Mohammed and set out for the assembly, Mohammed in a howdah up on the elephant: a good 100,000 accompanied him.

221

The infidels accompanied Mohammed's convoy with a great deal of noise. There were more than 100 guides, all blowing horns and bugles and blasting noisily on trumpets, playing harps and vielles and pipes at frequent intervals; some played flutes and others silver flageolets. The Saracens sang and chanted tunefully. They brought Mohammed all the way to the assembly amid such rejoicing, where they found the apostolic caliph waiting for them. When he saw Mohammed, he worshipped him enthusiastically, and all the kings in the army united in making rich offerings to him that same day.

222

The accursed race flocked round in huge numbers as Mohammed arrived in front of the leaders. He was made entirely of gold and silver, which glittered dazzlingly; he was seated on the elephant in a jewelled howdah. This was hollow inside and worked in filigree. Abundant jewels blazed and gleamed and glittered and could be seen from the outside, because it was so highly polished. They had done some cunning magic to trap a devil inside, who capered merrily and banged enthusiastically on a drum. He addressed the Saracens in a voice that could be clearly heard: 'In God's name! Listen to me and hear my commandments. The Christians who believe in God, misguided race that they are, have no right to these lands: they seized them wrongfully. Let God keep his Heaven: the land is mine. Not a single person will invoke Him [here]!' When they heard this all the pagans were profoundly grateful. 'This is a powerful lord to have,' they said to one another. 'This is the sort of God we should be believing in. Only a fool would not

³⁷⁵ According to Notker an elephant was given to Charlemagne by Harun al-Rashid in 797 or 802: *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, trans. L. Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 145. They are illustrated in bestiaries: see for example *Bestiary: ms Bodley 764*, trans. R. Barber (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 39–43, showing a specimen with a rather unlikely-looking three-storey howdah (p. 39). For Frederick II's elephant with howdah manned by Sicilian Saracens see E. Scigliano, *Love, War and Circuses: The Age-old Relationship between Elephants and Humans* (London, 2002), pp. 138–40.

acknowledge him. Now you can see full well that he has not withdrawn his favour from us: on the contrary he will give you all the support and help he can.³⁷⁶

'True,' said [the idol] Sathanas, 'doubt that at your peril.'

223

When the pagans had heard what Sathanas had to say, they thanked him and fell over themselves to worship him. The first to speak out was the caliph of Baghdad: 'My lords, listen to what my lord will tell us about the lavish *pardon* Mohammed will lay on for us. Let me tell you on his behalf (as he has ordered me to do) that a man who has five wives can take 20, or 15, or 10, or 30, or however many he fancies. That will make sure we increase the number of pagans and ensure the day of our people comes. To get ready for the Christians riding towards us, each of you should be turning his mind to procreating for as long as you can keep it up.'³⁷⁷ Now let me tell you about the rewards in store. Everyone who seeks Mohammed's forgiveness and goes into battle for love of him will, should he die, have two bezants put into his left hand and a stone in his right; Mohammed will put another stone in his breast. The infidel will go straight to Paradise where God gave Adam his commandments. He should offer the two bezants to the porter to be allowed in. If the porter refuses, he should throw the stone so that it hits the porter on the forehead and follow it with the other one in his breast so that the porter falls down dead. Like it or not, into Paradise he will go because Mohammed will forcibly drag him in and give the two bezants to reconcile you to God. That is how he will give you all salvation.³⁷⁸

'My lords,' said the pagans, 'let's get on and find the Frankish army. Anyone who backs out is a villain; anyone who turns tail deserves nothing but dishonour.' The emir sultan called to Corbaran: 'My friend, why don't I stay behind and you go on in front. The good king Salbons shall stay with me, so shall Bariagos and King Saria;³⁷⁹ the apostolic caliph will preach to us, and Mohammed will cheer me up and ensure I come to no harm until the army returns. Your job will be to capture the Christians and bring them here.'

'My lord,' replied Corbaran, 'it shall be done as you wish. But your son Brohadas will come with me; if you entrust me with him I shall ensure he is well

³⁷⁶ Compare the near-identical passage in the *Jérusalem*, vv. 5569–83.

³⁷⁷ A familiar theme for Saracens in the *chanson de geste*. Cf. Alexandre du Pont, *Roman de Mahomet*, vv. 1529–30 and see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 655–59 on polygamy and pro-natalist policies. For idols with a devil, cf. *Aspremont*, vv. 3816–18.

³⁷⁸ Like the Edessan wedding ceremony, bizarre burial customs appear to be an authorial invention.

³⁷⁹ Salbons and Bariagos are not attested elsewhere.

looked after, and comes to no harm until he returns.’³⁸⁰ At this the sultan bowed his head. He looked sternly at Corbaran.

224

‘So, Corbaran,’ said the sultan, ‘you think you would like to take my son with you? I shall put him into your keeping, and you must look after him well, on the following condition that I am going to explain now. If I do not get him back alive I shall make you pay for it: your head and limbs will not be safe.’

‘My lord,’ said Corbaran, ‘we shall not forget.’ With these words the drums were ordered to beat, and bugles and brass horns to sound. Corbaran of Oliferne went off to draw up his army in battle order. He disposed them in 32 companies, each containing 60,000 Esclers.³⁸¹ [Then] he mounted a horse and galloped off to speak with his mother.³⁸² As soon as she saw him she flung her arms round him. ‘My beautiful son,’ she said, ‘do you really intend to go to battle?’

‘I most certainly do,’ said Corbaran. ‘The Christians are determined to inflict a shameful defeat on us. They have already set up camp the other side of the Arm of St George and gone to the city of Antioch to overthrow it. But if I can only get my hands on them, they are all dead men and prisoners. I am going to manacle them together three by three and use them to regenerate our disused lands.’

‘My beautiful son,’ said his mother, ‘you must be stark staring mad. If you listen to me you will leave the Christian army well alone. Come to Oliferne instead and stay with me. I know for a fact – and I am keen to show you – that you will see precious few come back from all this great army: they will all be killed without hope of escape.’ Corbaran nearly flew off the handle at hearing this. ‘Do stop your chatter,’ he snapped at his mother. ‘You are a senile old fool, fit only for the knacker’s yard.’ He spurred his charger and gave orders for his army to get under way. His mother followed him because she loved him so much. The army marched for a good ten leagues more without stopping.

225

The army raised by the pagan bastards was enormous: pagandom had never produced a larger one. They rode over mountains, hills and valleys until they

³⁸⁰ Although not spelt out, Corbaran is clearly suspicious of his overlord: Brohadas seems to be intended as a guarantor of success.

³⁸¹ This is a total of 1.92 million: wild exaggeration even by the standards of the *chanson de geste*.

³⁸² This passage prefigures the much longer conversation between Corbaran and his mother at *laisses* 278–82, which is found in the *GF* and its related texts.

reached Soces,³⁸³ where they came back together: they spent the night encamped there. The following morning at daybreak, they sent word to Baldwin of Edessa by one of their interpreters who explained to him persuasively why he should renounce his religion and become a Turk, allowing himself to be struck three times as was their custom.³⁸⁴ Let me tell you how the leader of the venerable territory of Edessa responded to the messenger who had brought the invitation. He immediately had him richly dressed and given a mule with a well-stuffed saddle, a Turkish bow and feathered arrows. He sent word back to Corbaran that his army could be quite sure of this: nobody in the length and breadth of Edessa was remotely concerned by the prospect of their arrival. When Corbaran heard what his messenger said, he swore on his head that he was not giving up just because of a message: he was going to defeat and take Edessa. He settled his army down for a siege in the fields [outside Edessa].

226³⁸⁵

So there was Edessa besieged on both sides. Baldwin selected a messenger and sent him out that night after compline to go and seek help from the army of Our Lord: the city was very weakly defended with only 100 of our knights. The messenger made good time and found the emperor on the plains of Romania. He asked for help, which was accorded instantly. The bishop of Le Puy went to their aid with a large force at the request of the emperor. The soldiers covered the uninhabited territory at speed and reached Edessa on a calm night, bringing bread, wine and meat to replenish stocks in the city. Corbaran's face darkened when he found out. He had the horns sounded for an attack on Edessa. The inhabitants defended themselves vigorously, not giving as much as a throw of the dice for the pagans. Sansadoine advised Corbaran quietly to leave Edessa be, because he was never going to take it: the army should go back to Antioch, which would easily fall into their power.

³⁸³ AA calls the place of rendezvous 'Castle Sooch' (pp. 264–5), which Cahen identifies as 'un Tell ach-Chaikh entre Mardin et Hiçn Kaifa', north-east of Edessa on the river Tigris (C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades* (Paris, 1940), p. 215, n. 35). Duparc-Quioc tentatively identifies 'Soces' as Ra's al-'Ain (Resūlayn), further south and approximately equidistant from Aleppo and Mosul (*Edition*, p. 276). AA and the *Antioche* agree on the essentials of this abortive siege of Edessa (AA, pp. 264–7).

³⁸⁴ A distant echo of this is preserved in the *Gran Conquista*, where the beginning of the Crusade is attributed to the anger of Achard of Montmerle at being struck by the doorkeeper of the Holy Sepulchre: bk 1, chapters 186–8 (vol. 1, pp. 357–62; 518–21).

³⁸⁵ A rather confused passage. It is not clear why Baldwin sends a messenger to the emperor in the first place, why the emperor calls on Adhemar and how the message covered this long distance fast enough to be of any use. The relieving army is not attested historically.

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‘My lord,’ said Sansadoine, ‘leave Edessa to its own devices. We would have to do that anyway even if we had taken it. We can take the city and its Franks on our way back. After all, Mohammed has said that they cannot escape and will never get back to their own land in one piece unless they agree to serve and worship him. We shall kill every last one and chop off their limbs, or use them to restore our derelict territories to use.’

‘Good thinking!’ replied Corbaran. So he had his horns sounded and his drums beaten, giving the order for Saracens and pagans to mount. Harness was tightened and the army got under way across the plains towards Antioch. Baldwin of Edessa wanted to be sure what was happening. He gathered 140 knights and rode after the army, calling out challenges from behind; but the army in front of him did not waver in its course. This was an excellent move by our men, Jesus save them! They ensured that 20 pack animals laden with provisions were brought back to Edessa, thus ensuring that they would no longer have any worries about food. Meanwhile the massive [Saracen] army rode onwards – may God overthrow them! They went through the valleys of Dorcler³⁸⁶ and crossed the Euphrates, then made camp until the next daybreak; the following day they rode on hoping to make all possible speed. According to what I have been told, they covered so much ground in each day’s ride that they crossed an inlet leading to the sea. Corbaran ordered his men to pitch camp. Now picture Amedelis addressing him in these terms: ‘Let me have a word with you, Corbaran of Oliferne.’³⁸⁷ Order your army into ranks tomorrow in the knowledge that we are entering Garsion’s kingdom and the Franks are a redoubtable enemy. They make a habit of riding out in search of pagans, and are capable of completely routing our entire army.’ Corbaran nearly exploded when he heard this. ‘Amedelis,’ he said, ‘you are a thoroughly admirable man, and yet here you are completely terrified and unnerved by the Franks. By Mohammed my god, who has it in his power to save us all, I expect to find only chaff in the army at Antioch.’ They then demanded water and sat down to dine. When they had eaten they ordered the tablecloths to be removed. The following day when dawn foretold the coming daylight, the pagans – Saracens and Esclers – got under way.

228

So now the pagans and their mighty army were riding along some three days’ travel from the army of Our Lord. [The following night] the Turks camped on the side of a mountain. Meanwhile the Franks had failed to set a proper guard on

³⁸⁶ Not identified.

³⁸⁷ The passage looks forward to Amedelis’ later conversations with Corbaran and the latter’s accusations of cowardice.

their army.³⁸⁸ The pagans made a sortie out of Antioch and inflicted considerable damage on Bohemond's men, taking advantage of the fact that the latter were not armed and had not set a guard; they sneaked out quietly over the bridge and attacked the army in 14 places at once.

229

The Turks launched a fierce attack on our army and Bohemond's men came off very much the worse. When our fighters realised this, they were roused to anger: every last one seized his equipment and they drove the pagans back into the city by main force. The slaughter in and around the main gate was considerable. The Turks, shrieking, pushed the Franks back and forced them onto the bridge, inflicting losses with their bows and arrows. Amid all this confusion our men took a child hostage.³⁸⁹ This was by the will of Our Lord God, King of Paradise: it was because of this child that the town and palace were conquered. The child was the son of the richest man in the whole city, in charge of guarding one of the vaulted palaces of Antioch and the largest gate that gave onto the bridge. This Turk was very powerful, of high rank and rich. When he found out that his son had been carried off by the Franks he dissolved into tears, extremely upset. He loaded up a dromedary with samite and sent it across to our noble leaders in the army of God; in an accompanying letter he implored them in the name of God of Paradise to look after his child and not to kill him; [in return] he would give the Franks three packhorses fully laden with bezants, and his lifelong friendship.

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This father was plunged into grief because he loved his child. He hurried to find an interpreter as soon as possible, and a large dromedary laden with cloth of silver (in our language known as samite). He sent these to our noble and brave men: if they would look after his child properly for the love of Almighty God, he would give them any ransom they cared to ask and would offer the Franks his lifelong friendship. He took 60 of the best horses to be found in the Orient and a large piebald packhorse: he loaded them all up with bezants and glittering pure gold and sent them as a token to seek the Franks' agreement, begging them to look after his child for the sake of God the Redeemer who was born of the Virgin at Bethlehem. Our leaders were delighted when they realised what was going on. They treated the

³⁸⁸ Duparc-Quioic characterises the *laisses* which follow as 'la partie la plus originale et entement la moins remaniée ... où les traits originaux abondent' (*Edition*, p. 279).

³⁸⁹ AA refers similarly to the boy's captivity as the alleged reason for the treachery of Datien, saying 'aiunt etiam quidem' (pp. 272–3). Datien's name is not given here as we might have expected given his prominence later in the poem.

messenger well, calling him forward to hand over the letter at once. Count Hugh read it and a huge grin spread over his face. Baldwin of Le Bourg responded nobly with an immediate and admirable gesture: he took off his fur robe and gave it to the pagan, while the iron-grey-haired Hugh of St-Pol gave him a red buckram robe to wear. They then mounted him on a mule that could amble and led him round and through the army, laughing and joking; however, they were very careful not to show him the poor rank and file because they were half-naked, in a wretched state and dying of hunger. Our leaders met in a green meadow to agree their strategy; the messenger was also there, watching them carefully. At this point imagine Hugh of St-Pol galloping up, with the Turkish child balanced in front of him standing on his saddle. Our leaders greeted them enthusiastically.

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Our leaders treated the child extremely well, equipping him like a little Frank with the smallest arms that could be found in the army: a hauberk, a green-sheened helmet, a shield banded with gold and a painted lance with a crimped pennant. They found for him a dappled warhorse that was handsome, spirited and able to amble. Then they turned the child thus equipped over to the messenger. He took his leave of the Franks and left with the child. They clattered over the bridge and into Antioch, closely scrutinised by the pagans who were muttering to each other: 'Where on earth has this Turk been? Judging by the equipment he must have killed a Frank.'

'I expect you're right,' was the reply. Messenger and child passed by and arrived at the palace where they halted. The father came out to meet them: disarming his son he kissed and hugged him, overjoyed to see him. He cross-questioned him about the state of the Franks. 'In faith, my lord, I must be honest: there has never been a race like them. Their generosity is unheard of. They serve a God who carries out all their wishes, for example giving them wine and corn. In contrast our god Mohammed is powerless. I wouldn't give a dead dog for his strength. I want to believe in Jesus, bringer of light. If I do not become a Christian I shall not live to be a man.'³⁹⁰

'Are you sure of this, my handsome son?'

'Yes I am, in the name of charity.'

'My handsome son,' said his father, 'keep your voice down. If the Turks realise what you are saying, your head will be chopped off.'

³⁹⁰ Turkish apostasy is a regular event in the *chansons de geste*: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 494–570, specifically pp. 514–16 for conversion by admiration for Christianity.

232

'My handsome son,' said his father, 'tell me the truth. Do you really believe in Jesus, their God?'

'Yes I do,' said the child, 'I am quite serious. If I am not baptised I am not long for this world.'

'My handsome son,' said his father, 'please be discreet. If the pagans hear what you are saying they will make you suffer for it. I too will seek baptism if God so wills. Now let us leave matters there for appearances' sake.'

'My lord,' replied the child, 'I shall do as you say.' That same night the Turk slipped across to God's army to talk to Bohemond. He warned him urgently that a pagan army was on its way from the East, and [the Christians] should give some thought to defending themselves and avoiding harm. He said no more, taking his leave and going away. Bohemond was left to spend a sleepless night. The following day he mounted a Syrian mule and called all the leaders together for a discussion.

233

All the leaders of God's army came together to discuss the situation. Bohemond set out clearly his understanding of how things stood: the Turk had told him when he came to his tent about [Corbaran's] army that was enormous and the most ferocious ever seen; and its camp was only two days march away from them. When they heard this our leaders did not know what to say. It was left to the bishop of Le Puy to put things into words: 'My lords, we need to think hard about whom we send to have a look at the armies of Mohammed's people.'

'Count Stephen [of Blois]!' they responded.³⁹¹ 'God be blessed!' he replied. He and his companions swung quickly into the saddle: they numbered 30 knights, with only one youth among them. Lord Stephen turned about and spurred away. They came up the Black Mountain at speed and looked down on the left into the valley of Corbon. There they saw the cooking fires of the black race, whose forces were encamped more than 14 leagues around. The count halted and leaned forward in his saddle. He heard the noise and commotion of the Saracens: brass bugles, bronze percussion instruments and bull-roarer horns all sounding in a cacophony. He was absolutely terrified. He returned to the army of God in a state of confusion: downcast, gloomy and miserable, with his head sunk in his hood. The renowned

³⁹¹ This is bizarre in terms of the logic of the story. Stephen's cowardice at Nicaea has been well and truly rammed home; yet here he is appointed by universal acclaim to carry out an important mission. Duparc-Quioç suggests that this episode comes from Richard le Pèlerin: the cowardice at Nicaea would be Graindor's addition, and his later cowardice after the capture of Antioch translated from RM. It is unclear whether this is further evidence for the way in which the poem has been on occasion maladroitly stitched together, or whether the situation is deliberately created so that Stephen can yet again be pilloried.

[Christian] race came crowding round him, asking whether the Turkish army was present in large numbers. He struggled to utter a single word or say anything. Godfrey of Bouillon was the first to notice how he looked. 'Leave him be, my lords, there is no need for any discussion. I think he must have been injured in the liver or the lungs: let him go away to Alexandretta, near the hill of Orion.'³⁹²

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'Leave him be, my lords,' said the duke of Bouillon. 'The count is ill; I can see the colour draining from his face. Let him get himself carried to Alexandretta: that is a strong castle and he can happily stay there until he returns to us, assuming he makes a recovery.'

'Lord Duke of Bouillon, I am glad to hear you talk in these terms,' replied Count Stephen, 'and I thank you for it.' So they had a litter prepared for Count Stephen, carried by 12 of the poorest in the army, to each of whom he gave 12 pennies of Lucca.³⁹³ They carried him on their shoulders until the sun started to go down and Antioch was out of sight. Then without further ado the count hopped out of the litter, because actually he was not ill at all. His behaviour was thoroughly reprehensible. He set off at a great pace, making all 12 of his poor bearers go jogging along with him to make sure none of them went back and told on him.³⁹⁴ Meanwhile our leaders – God honour them! – were back in the army. That night the noble Count Raymond was on guard duty and with him the much renowned count of Flanders, each accompanied by his entire household carrying arms. They kept watch all night until the following day dawned.

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Bohemond of Sicily, meanwhile, was lying in his tent: he was exhausted and desperate for sleep, having ridden that day from the port of St Simeon. He had a dream that seemed to foretell astonishing events.³⁹⁵ He saw the sky open and the earth shook. A golden circle appeared from his tent that completely surrounded the walls of Antioch and cast its reflection so that the whole city of Antioch shone

³⁹² See note to *laisse* 62 for more on Stephen of Blois. It is not clear what the hill of Orion is; possibly the hill to the east. Stephen's cowardice is heightened by the implicit comparison with Godfrey.

³⁹³ Cf. AA for the use of currency from Lucca on Crusade (pp. 300–301).

³⁹⁴ AA says the illness was a pretext (pp. 266–9); RM says it was real (pp. 158–9).

³⁹⁵ Dreams are often used in the *chanson de geste* as a way of prefiguring the future. See for example *Roland* ll.717–36 for Charlemagne's dreams (vv. 717–36); *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, ed. and trans. G.S. Burgess (New York, 1988), v. 71; *Le Couronnement de Louis*, ed. E. Langlois, 2nd edn (Paris, 1925), v. 289. See also Introduction, chapter 3.

brightly. The Saracens were telling him that Mohammed was dead. The sun and the moon pulled him up into the air so that the panels of his hauberk spread out across the earth. The most imposing of the palaces bowed down before him, so low that it hung down across the wall. One of the soldiers from the army clambered up to it, followed in short order by all the others. They were almost in the palace when the ladder broke, and those still on it tumbled down terrified.³⁹⁶ Bohemond woke up, having slept long and deeply. He recounted his dream to God, his guarantor of success. Then he looked at Antioch. The walls were perfectly vertical. 'Without doubt,' he said, 'it was a bad day for you when you fell into the accursed power of the Turks. May God, His holy body and blessed saints, allow me to live as long as I can do him service!'

236

Antioch was an extremely well fortified city. Its walls were high and formed a complete circuit; it had 50 shining white marble towers; it was guarded by 12 highly respected emirs, each in charge of four towers except for one who had more – six – under his control and was responsible for all decisions as Garsion's deputy. One morning all 12 princes got up and took Garsion to the temple of the Devil. There the emirs all harangued him. 'My lord, just what are we going to do? We need reinforcements. Sansadoine our messenger has still not returned. I think help is not going to arrive in time and the sultan has gone to stay in Nubia. So let us ask the Franks for a whole month's truce with guarantees of good faith on both sides. During that period the army will arrive and the Franks will pay a heavy price. We shall need to go to some lengths to deceive them.'

'I am happy to grant permission,' said Garsion. He had the plan explained to two of his interpreters: one was Greek and the other Armenian, and both were fluent and persuasive talkers.³⁹⁷ He sent them across to the Franks to set out the proposal. The messengers started by going to Bohemond's tent. They greeted him ceremoniously and spoke persuasively. 'Bohemond of Sicily, hear us out patiently. We come on behalf of King Garsion to seek a truce with you. It will be guaranteed with hostages for a period of 40 days. Anyone who breaks the truce will be beheaded. During that period you will be able to buy food and drink inside the city. We shall if you agree negotiate the surrender of the town without another arrow being fired or lance thrown.'

'My lords,' replied Bohemond, 'I ask you to let me consult my allies.' Our barons assembled, whom God loves and holds dear. Bohemond told them the terms which had been suggested for the truce. Poor and rich alike immediately began to shout: 'For God's sake, my lord, accept without further ado!'

³⁹⁶ The ladder would indeed break: see *laissez* 254–55.

³⁹⁷ Compare vv. 9417–20 for Greeks and Armenians as interpreters, and see Riquer, 'Los intérpretes'.

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When Bohemond heard the reaction of our troops, with poor and rich alike desperate for him to agree to a truce of 40 days, he returned to the messengers and pledged to keep to their terms. The messengers wasted no time in taking their leave. They went back to Garsion of Antioch and told him that they had sworn and pledged the truce. Garsion started to pour out thanks to Mohammed. Meanwhile the Christians in the army (Jesus save them!) went wild with delight at the start of the truce. But unless Jesus, Salvation of the whole world, protects them, they are going to find they have paid a very high price – the Persian armies are redoubtable opponents, and nobody has ever before seen so many of them in the same place at the same time! If the Turks in Antioch had known to expect them, they would have been able to inflict huge damage on our men. The Saracens and Esclers were ensconced in Antioch. There were 12 highly capable emirs, each in charge of four towers; one of them was richer than the others – indeed pre-eminent in the army – and was in charge of six towers as well as the main gate. He dreamt the whole night that God raised him up, baptised him with water, and gave him new life from a spring; in return, he surrendered Antioch to the Franks. He had to keep this completely secret from his whole family, including his wife whom he adored. He thought things over as he lay in bed, begging Jesus humbly for his wife's sake that he would be able to convert her to Christianity.

238

The Turk was lying in bed. He was very brave, the same one to whom the child had been returned. Picture the scene: a message came to him from Almighty God.³⁹⁸ 'My friend, are you asleep or awake? Listen to what I command you.' On hearing this, the Turk sat bolt upright. 'My lord, who are you that speak to me?'

'My friend, I am sent from Jesus of Bethlehem. God, the Father and Redeemer, whom the faithless Jews tortured on the Cross, has sent me to tell you to put the city under Christian authority. They are outside suffering in the rain and buffeted by strong winds.' The messenger from God turned and left at this, leaving the Turk pondering what to do. Eventually after much thought he fell asleep again. The messenger from God returned and stood in front of him. 'My friend, are you asleep or awake? You are not making my job an easy one. Our Lord orders you not to procrastinate any further. Hand this city over to the Christians. Get on and make a strong reliable ladder out of leather so that they can climb up this wall. I am leaving. But get on with it and don't waste any more time prevaricating.' The angel turned and left, leaving the Turk in tears: he slept not a wink until dawn.

³⁹⁸

For visions as part of narrative technique compare Peter the Hermit at *laisse* 16 and Peter Bartholomew at *laisse* 291 and see note at *laisse* 16. FC 231–2 has a similar account (p. 98), to which GN takes exception (p. 156).

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As soon as dawn broke the Turk got up, dressed and ornamented himself as becomes a pagan. He went down into a vaulted cellar and found at least 1000 deer hides in it. He shut himself up in the storeroom with a couple of good sharp steel knives he had brought along, hole-punchers and awls: he had thought ahead. He cut the hides up into long wide strips; he discarded the underside of the deer hides and stitched the backs firmly together. Each back was secured with 28 straps. He then measured out carefully the distance from one rung to the next, estimating a gap of about two feet. Each was secured with a double knot.³⁹⁹ Each rung was so strong and wide that it could hold three knights in full armour. Unfortunately the Turk did not think to make a proper seam in the middle where the leather was torn and ragged. By God! That subsequently led to heavy losses for us, many hands wrung and much hair torn in anguish! By the time the ladder was finished it was very big and long, some 114 feet. The Turk rose to his feet and crossed himself. He left the storeroom and went out onto the walls. Looking down onto the Frankish forces, he addressed them secretly in his heart. 'Alas, noble knights! If only you knew my intentions towards you and what I am really thinking. I want to hand the city over to you just as you wish.' When night fell the Turk made his way down and slipped secretly into our army. He sought out our leaders, in particular Bohemond, who was well disposed towards him. On seeing him Bohemond welcomed him warmly. 'Listen to what I have to say, Bohemond of Sicily,' said the Turk. 'Tomorrow evening the city will be yours. You must make sure to be ready at vespers.'

'My lord,' said Bohemond, 'We shall do as you say. And if you decide to believe in our God and to worship Him, be absolutely certain that you will be saved.'

240

'Bohemond,' said the Turk, 'tell me in the name of your faith – if someone were to hand the city over to you, what would his reward be?'

'I can tell you that right now,' said the duke. 'He would without question be given his lands and property free of obligation; he would get 1000 bezants of income to use as he pleased; and during my lifetime nobody would contest his right to this.' They discussed the matter further and came to mutual agreement, the Christian swearing it on oath and the Turk according to his religion.

³⁹⁹ A distinctly realistic description, as often in the *Antioche*. Notably, AA and FC confirm a rope-type ladder: AA says it was of bull hide (pp. 276–7); cf. FC (p. 99), but RA and the *GF* author (both present at the siege) refer to a rigid one (RA, p. 47; *GF*, p. 46).

241

The Turk swore to Bohemond by his faith that he would hand over the city the following evening. That night he brought his son as a hostage to ensure good faith, and Bohemond swore a solemn promise. The Turk slipped away as quietly as he had come. Those of our soldiers who saw him had no inkling that the purpose of his trip had been to betray the city; they thought the truce had put an end to such negotiations. Bohemond, however, was busy turning the situation very much to his advantage.⁴⁰⁰ He asked for all the key men in the army to be assembled. 'My lords,' he said, 'let me share my thinking with you. We have suffered hellishly here at Antioch. If someone were to hand it over to me, let me ask you whether you would be willing by God's law to let me have the city in the name of charity.' Most of them replied that they would not be opposed. However, the count of St-Gilles exploded: 'There is no way I shall agree! I haven't suffered such misery and hunger and thirst and hardship for nothing. If I don't get my share it will be bought at a high price!'⁴⁰¹ With these words they all returned to their bivouacs for two entire days, in a state of despair because they were too exhausted ever to take the city. And as yet they knew nothing of the proud pagan army that was about to break like a storm over their heads.⁴⁰² No Christian had ever seen such a vast force. Corbaran of Oliferne had a messenger summoned. He sent him to Garsion with instructions to say that help would arrive within three days; he had brought the entire empire of Persia as reinforcements. The messenger turned and left; he rode across country, urging his dromedary on and spurring all the way to Antioch, where he arrived in the evening. He dismounted on the steps that led up to the front of the palace.

242

The Persian messenger swung off his mount on the staircase, and rushed up into the main palace. He delivered his news to the mighty King Garsion: Corbaran was on his way with Turks and Slavs, and with him 30 emirs and the Red Lion.⁴⁰³ At this the emir fell down and worshipped Mohammed. He then had word sent to Bohemond that as of the following day the truce was over. This sent a cold shiver

⁴⁰⁰ An unusually frank comment. Bohemond does not show up to full advantage in this episode, rather like the parallel account in *RM*, pp. 143–4; *GF* similarly suggests he was 'gavisus serenaque mente' – 'rejoicing and with a calm mind' (p. 44).

⁴⁰¹ *RA* is the only other author to say that Raymond of St-Gilles was alone in his opposition, but after rather than before the battle (p. 65).

⁴⁰² Even though *Datien* warned them in *laisse* 232 and Stephen of Blois was sent to reconnoitre in *laisse* 233. Again hard to tell whether this is clumsy combination of source material or selective amnesia to tell a better story.

⁴⁰³ Fifty emirs at *laisses* 332, 356.

down the spines of the Franks. The leaders rounded on the count of St-Gilles: 'So much for the results of your taking a stand. If it hadn't been for your pride the city would have been in our hands by now. Any further opportunity to take it will be dearly bought.' Garsion of Antioch was up in the citadel. He had his 12 renowned emirs summoned. When they arrived he addressed them as follows: 'My lords, keep a close watch on the town and exercise every suspicion. The mightiest reinforcements ever seen are on the way.'

243

'My lords,' said Garsion, 'be very much on your guard. I have told the Franks the truce is at an end. So anyone they manage to capture will be made to suffer horribly.' The 12 companions-in-arms turned and left the council of war.⁴⁰⁴ Each rode back to his palace and dismounted from his horse. Meanwhile the Turk who had been baptised did not waste any time before fulfilling the promise he had given Lord Bohemond. He sat up all night although his people had been instructed to sleep. He sent a messenger secretly to the son of Robert Guiscard, who came with willing alacrity. 'Bohemond,' said the Turk, 'you are too slow off the mark. I shall keep my promise to you now and in all particulars: either take the city or give my hostage back.'⁴⁰⁵ But if you wait even as long as dawn tomorrow you will be dead, defeated beyond hope of recovery – because the massive relieving army from the East arrives tomorrow.⁴⁰⁶

244

'Bohemond,' said the Turk, 'if you do not follow up on your promise now you will never have another chance as long as you live. Tomorrow we shall have the powerful King Corbaran here with the Red Lion from the west; there are a good 30 proud and valiant kings; and the army they lead is so large that nobody has ever seen its like. If you have not captured the town by nightfall, you will suffer for it tomorrow.'

'My noble friend,' replied Bohemond, 'be sure you can go and get ready – I shall not wait any longer. I shall spur off at top speed to find the [other] leaders.' The Turk agreed and urged him to hurry. The two turned and left immediately. Bohemond spurred back to the main army as fast as he could while the pagan

⁴⁰⁴ Referred to as 'li .XII. per' in terms reminiscent of Charlemagne's twelve peers.

⁴⁰⁵ The Turk's son: see above, *laisse* 241.

⁴⁰⁶ This is inconsistent, in that the crusaders are assumed not to know about Corbaran's approach; however, there is a gain in dramatic intensity since Bohemond now knows something the others do not.

made his way back to his palace lost in thought. There he happened across his wife, who addressed him as follows.⁴⁰⁷

245

‘My lord,’ said the pagan woman, ‘tell me, where have you just been? By Mohammed! Do you think I haven’t noticed what you have been doing spending so much time talking to the Franks? Do tell me what business you have with them. You are there talking morning and evening. I can only suppose you want to convert to Christianity or that you are plotting some kind of treachery to help them. Let me tell you that by Mohammed (to whom my heart is devoted) if I live to see sunrise tomorrow I shall tell everything to my father and elder brothers. Your head will be lopped off in Garsion’s palace.’

‘My lady,’ replied Datien, ‘you could not be more wrong.’⁴⁰⁸ I would rather be torn limb from limb than do any such thing. Come up onto that wall over there with me and let me show you the Franks – their tents, their bivouacs and their huge numbers of mounted knights. You will see our son among them. He has been knighted: you will see how he bears arms and in what high esteem he is held by the Franks.’

‘Your lightest wish is my command,’ replied his wife. So they climbed up the stairs alongside the ramparts and came to a high platform next to the wall. Imagine them leaning on one of the windows. ‘My lady,’ said Datien, ‘listen to me for a moment. I do believe in Jesus who was hanged on the Cross, and in the Blessed Virgin Mary who bore him in her womb.’ When the pagan woman heard this, the blood drained from her face. ‘Ha!’ she said. ‘I knew something was up, you coward! Well, you cannot conceal your wicked intentions any longer. You will regret the day you uttered those words. You will be torn limb from limb.’ At this Datien swung round towards her and seized her arms, beside himself with a blind fury. He flung her down off the ramparts. Her neck snapped and her body was smashed and shattered into 20 pieces. Devils carried off her soul; her body was broken beyond repair. The Turk went down into the vaulted storeroom and collected the ladder. He strapped the head of the ladder to himself, harnessing himself to one end and two dogs to the other. He and his two dogs dragged the ladder all the way up the wall and made it fast, lashing it firmly to a large crenellation.⁴⁰⁹ Then he threw

⁴⁰⁷ No chronicle refers to his wife.

⁴⁰⁸ This is the first time the traitor is named. He is Pirrus in *GF* (pp.44–7) and Rūzbah in *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period*, trans. D.S. Richards (3 vols, Aldershot, 2006–10), vol. 1, p. 14. AA tells a very similar story to the *Antioche*, but gives no name (pp. 272–9). Most intriguingly, OV calls him Pirrus Datianus (pp. 86–7 and n. 4).

⁴⁰⁹ There is evidence for using dogs as pack animals (e.g. *GF*, p. 23). However there is dramatic exaggeration: it is hard to believe Pirrus could physically have carried a ladder this size.

the other end down behind him to the ground. Four feet of it lay on the ground. Bohemond of Sicily was not at all sure [what to do]. In a state of high anxiety he went to the tent of Godfrey of Bouillon. 'My lord,' he said, 'in God's name come quickly. The town and the palace are about to be delivered into our hands!'

'May God be praised!' the duke replied.

246

When the duke of Bouillon heard these words, he stretched out his hands to God and thanked him fervently. He quickly armed himself and ordered his troops to do likewise. Then wasting no time he made his way round the tents, getting the leaders, their knights and the courageous sergeants (God help them!) into battle readiness. They numbered 1,140, all good and determined troops. However, they had no idea where the duke was taking them: they thought they were going out to fight the Turks (the Body of God curse them!) who had just arrived in the army from Persia. Bohemond and Duke Godfrey led the way. The sergeants went forward on foot and suffered greatly. Their shoes were ripped and their hose went into holes. They marched in close ranks under a serene moon. The warhorses crowded them with little consideration for their plight; they grumbled under their breath so that no voice was heard, invoking Jesus, Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 'Gentlemen,' said Godfrey, 'don't lose heart. Why are stout seasoned troops like you so worried? If those filthy bastards of Turks do attack us, each one of you is quite capable of defending yourself with your burnished sword.'

'Have no fear,' replied the Christian troops. 'We shall follow you to the bitter end.' The good duke of Bouillon thanked them courteously. They came to a halt in a meadow down in a valley. He sent Robert of Normandy on ahead covered by Count Robert of Flanders; Tancred and Bohemond, in whom he placed considerable trust; and the other leaders in charge of the army.

247

The good duke of Bouillon stopped in a valley along with a large number of noblemen, equipped with splendid gold and enamelled hauberks and helmets. The other leaders turned and rode away together: the stout-hearted Hugh of Vermandois, Robert of Flanders armed and on horseback, [Robert of] Normandy with a silken pennant, and Bohemond of Sicily holding the royal banner, accompanied by a large contingent of leaders.⁴¹⁰ May God avert trouble from them! They made their way down a slope to the city. May God our Spiritual Father be their guide!

⁴¹⁰ It is not clear whose royal banner: it could only have been that of the king of France, in which case Bohemond would not have been holding it.

248

Our barons spurred forward at speed and arrived at the city completely unnoticed. When they arrived at the foot of the wall they found the ladder dangling and the [body of the] wife of the pagan who had been flung over the battlements. The Turk was holding a lighted lantern up on the wall; he had shaded it well on the city side and the light was falling on the ladder. He was delighted to see our leaders. He called out to Bohemond, his words falling over each other in their haste: 'Noble duke of Sicily, you have been far too slow off the mark. It is well past midnight, in fact nearly dawn. If the pagans see me I shall have my head cut off and you will see your army cut down tomorrow. I have given you this city on a plate. For Heaven's sake get on and take it – or give me back my son as we agreed. You Franks are pathetic specimens, frightened of their own shadows.' At this Robert of Flanders flushed. He said to Bohemond, 'You can see the ladder. It's ready, right there. Go on, up it first – you were the one who was offered the city!'

'My noble friend,' said Bohemond, 'you are wasting your time talking to me like this. In faith, I couldn't bring myself to climb that ladder for a tower full of pure gold. You would soon see me come tumbling off.'⁴¹¹

249

The Turk was up on the wall holding a lighted lantern. He said to Bohemond: 'Just keep your promise. Either take the city or give me back my child. God in glory! You Franks really are a bunch of cowards. Your courage and resolution lasts only while things are running your way. Bohemond, he said, 'why on earth don't you just get on with it? It is well past minute and dawn is imminent. Make no mistake: if anyone sees me doing this, my head will be off tomorrow in the emir's palace. Don't let me down now. By God who was born of a virgin in Bethlehem, I wouldn't behave like you even if I were to have my head cut off.' At these words the soldiers all began to shake. But not a single one of them had the bravery, the determination or the guts to take the risk and agree to climb the ladder.

250

Count Robert of Flanders saw the Franks chickening out, not one of them brave enough to dare climb up into the city. He wept with sheer frustration. He made his way back to the duke of Bouillon, whom he had left behind in the valley to keep an eye on the remainder of the troops. The duke saw him coming and called out: 'In faith, my noble cousin, you have taken your time. It is well past midnight – nearly

⁴¹¹ Bohemond's cowardice is unexpected here but comes from RM (p. 145), the source at this point. See RM, pp. 22–3.

daybreak in fact. Whom have you left in charge of the city? Bohemond, to whom we shall have to hand it over? We ought to be getting inside as soon as possible, because if the Turks realise we are out here they will attack us hard and go and behead our sick and injured in the camp. The army from Persia is almost here. We really must get on and into the city!

'My lord,' replied the count, 'in God's name stop right there. Our knights are behaving abysmally. They are all in front of the ladder but none of them can bring himself to climb up!'⁴¹² When he heard this the duke was absolutely furious. 'Let me go and sort them out,' he said to Count Robert. 'No, my noble cousin, you shouldn't do that. Your post is here, making sure that the pagans do not get out and attack the main army.' At these words the good duke invoked God: 'Our glorious Lord and Father God, who allowed yourself to suffer on the Holy Cross for the salvation of your people, just as this is true – which I believe beyond question – please grant that tonight we may take the city.' To Count Robert he said: 'You are worthy of the highest praise and I do not know anyone more noble in bearing arms. Either go up the ladder first, or let me do it.' Count Robert heard these words and set off back [to the city].

251

Count Robert of Flanders made all possible speed, spurring to the city as fast as he could. He marched up to the foot of the ladder where our soldiers were milling around in a wretchedly miserable state of anxiety. The Turk was up on the wall, by now beside himself with fear. He called Bohemond again, jiggling the ladder in front of him. 'Hey, my noble lord! Get on and come up. You can see this is one climb well worth the effort. Either you or one of the others, whoever comes first, will be the overlord of the entire city!' All the Franks looked at the ladder, saying nothing. Count Robert of Flanders addressed our men. 'My lords,' said the count, 'pull yourselves together. I have left my entire land of Flanders and all its fiefs; I have left behind my adoring wife Clemence, and my two small sons whom God will look after on my behalf.'⁴¹³ In honour of Lord God who created the whole world, I am going to be the first one to go up.' He seized the ladder firmly with both hands and, grabbing the strap of his shield, twisted it round behind his back, determined to get ready to climb the ladder. At that point Fulcher the orphan, an excellent knight born in Flanders, grabbed him round the hips and said to Count

⁴¹² Crusade texts struggle to balance the official position on Christian heroism with the realities of cowardice and demoralisation. Here the *Antioche* exaggerates considerably for dramatic and humorous effect what is in the sources.

⁴¹³ Robert's wife Clemence was from the comital house of Burgundy: Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, p. 247.

Robert:⁴¹⁴ ‘Listen to me, my lord. You are renowned as the son of St George.⁴¹⁵ Losing you would be a big blow. But nobody is going to be particularly upset if I get killed. I shall be the one to go up, noble lord, and Jesus will be at my side.’ Count Robert heard him but lifted his hands up the ladder, kicked Fulcher back down, then made the sign of the Cross and climbed up the first two rungs.

252

Count Robert of Flanders was in a towering rage. He climbed the first two rungs of the ladder before anyone could react until Fulcher the orphan seized him round the hips. ‘Lord Robert of Flanders, my brave lord, do not lose your temper. There is no count more valiant than you at taking up arms. Your death would be a disaster. My noble lord, you have extensive territories that need administering as well as a wife and children – may God grant you see them again! But if I died it would not matter at all: I have nothing to give and expect to take nothing in return. In the name of the Holy Spirit, let me go up first! So what if I die: it will be in the service of God. There are 1,000 better men than me in this army who are more worth keeping alive.’

‘My lord,’ chimed in the soldiers, ‘please agree that Fulcher can go up first, if you can bring yourself to.’

253

‘Lord Robert of Flanders,’ implored the soldiers, ‘we beg you for God and in the name of God’s love, do let Fulcher be the first to go up.’

‘My lords,’ replied the count, ‘your request is granted. Go ahead and climb the ladder – that is my command, by the body of St Simeon who held our Lord on his right knee.’ The Turk Datien called out to them in a low voice, ‘In God’s name, get a move on. I can see the first streaks of day in the sky.’ Fulcher prepared himself, taking his shield painted with a lion and slinging it over his back behind his shoulders with the device facing outwards.⁴¹⁶ Ready to climb the ladder, he began to pray: ‘My Lord and Father, I invoke your holy name.’⁴¹⁷ You were born of the Blessed Virgin; you saved St Jonah from the belly of the whale; you brought St Lazarus back from the dead. You pardoned Mary Magdalen when she wept at

⁴¹⁴ The sources vary on who was first into Antioch. RM (p. 145) and RA (p. 47) name Fulcher of Chartres: *Dramatis personae*. Neither *GF* nor *AA* gives a name.

⁴¹⁵ This reference is not clear.

⁴¹⁶ Duparc-Quioic identifies this with the black lion of Philippe of Alsace (*Edition*, p. 305). It could equally well be a symbol of Fulcher’s heroism. Either way it is an anachronism: there is little evidence of heraldic devices in 1098 when this is set.

⁴¹⁷ Standard *prière du plus grand peril*: see Introduction, chapter 3.

your feet in the house of Simon, shedding so many heartfelt tears that she was able to wash them all over for you before anointing you with myrrh as an earnest of her intentions, a good deed for which she was well rewarded. My Lord, you suffered on the Holy Cross when Longinus belaboured you so violently with the Lance; it is fact that he had never been able to see, but when the blood ran down the haft of the lance to his hands, he wiped it over his eyes and saw light; "Thank you, Lord!" he cried in gratitude; you pardoned him and forgave his sins. You were laid in the Sepulchre and kept under guard like a thief. Three days later you rose from the dead and went down to Hell, which could not stand against you; you released your own, Noah and Aaron. Then you went up to Heaven on Ascension Day, having told the Apostles they should preach the Holy Gospel to us throughout the world. As they watched you went up to your mansions up in Your Holy dwelling place where no evil men dwell. My Lord! Insofar as all this is true – and we firmly believe it is – let me climb up the ladder for my salvation, and save the Franks from death and captivity by letting us conquer the town and the citadel.' He raised his hand in a sign of blessing, then seized the ladder and climbed up. Tancred climbed after him, then Bohemond, and after these three Raimbaut Creton. Next came Count Rotrou of Perche, then Yvon; Gontier of Aire, squire to [Robert] the Frisian; Thomas of La Fère and Drogo de Moncy, Everard of Le Puiset with Hugh of Vermandois, Enguerrand of St-Pol and Fulcher of Alençon; Robert of Normandy who hated the greedy; Count Robert of Flanders (may God pardon him!); and finally Eustache, brother of the duke of Bouillon.⁴¹⁸ They climbed in haste, vying with each other.

254

The Franks now all hurried to make the ascent, so many of them that there were 35 on the ladder. So – by God! – imagine the damage when the ladder broke! Two knights were killed as a result, to the horror of the Franks. Those up on the wall looked down and saw the ladder broken. This dismayed them, but their courage quickly returned and they were not overwhelmed by fear.⁴¹⁹

255

There was consternation when the ladder broke. Two knights of Our Lord's army were killed and their souls went to meet their Creator. Those up on the wall were terrified, exchanging scared looks: however God gave them new courage and vigour. 'My lords,' said Datien, 'be courageous! Don't lose heart! Strike

⁴¹⁸ Most of these come from NE France. We do not know why God should pardon Robert in particular; it may be a formulaic phrase.

⁴¹⁹ The broken ladder is found in historical accounts: *GF*, p. 47; *RA*, p. 47; *AA*, p. 279.

vigorously! Let each of you remember the virtues of his ancestors. I shall help you on your way by giving you my palace and my tower as a token of the faith I have long had in Christ my Saviour. I am going to put out the lantern because it casts too much light, and anyway now that dawn has broken there is enough daylight.'

256

'You need not worry, my lords,' said Datien. 'I believe firmly in the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I shall not let you down as long as I live.' Count Robert of Flanders thanked him courteously. 'My lords and noble companions,' he said, 'how many of us are there up here?'

'There are thirty-five,' said Count Robert of Normandy. 'That's not much of a force, in faith,' said Tancred. 'My lords,' said Datien, 'don't lose heart. The Lord God who created you will come to your aid. Half of you should make for the old keep. The other half should go to the gate below it and break it down with hatchets of steel so that our cavalry can get inside. Then we need to make for the gate near La Mahomerie. I am quite sure the city will be taken by storm. Each of you must strike hard with your glittering swords; anyone who runs into a pagan must make sure to kill him.'

'Shame on anyone who does not join in!' replied our men. They proceeded to disperse, positioning their men; the Turk handed each of them a hatchet, which he had taken care to leave there earlier. Now the Christians set off, spoiling for a fight, and the Turk (God's blessing on him!) guided them down from the wall.

257

So our Christians split into two parties and set off. One party of twenty made its way down to the lower gate. They hacked at the bars holding the doors closed with the hatchets they were carrying.⁴²⁰ Datien had given them oak stakes that they used to undermine the ground in front of the gate. The Turk (God's blessing on him!) called out to the Franks and, addressing them very politely, instructed them as follows: 'My lords, I happen to have a brother who has always been very dear to me. He is in that old palace up there.'⁴²¹ Come in with me so we can hear what he thinks. If he decides to believe in God, he will be saved. If, though, he does not agree that God speaks truth, let his head be cut off straight away – letting him get away would be a big mistake on our part since he would injure and kill us. Better

⁴²⁰ The OF word here is 'flaiel', literally a flail. T-L quotes a number of examples suggesting this refers to the wooden bar put across doors to hold them shut (vol. 3, pp. 1887–9).

⁴²¹ RM says there were two brothers (p. 145); see also Gilo of Paris, *Historia Vie Hierosolimitanae*, ed. and trans. C.W. Grocock and J.E. Siberry (Oxford, 1997), pp. 166–7.

for him to die than for you not to take the city.' Count Robert of Flanders took responsibility for the Turk [Datien] and brought him up to the palace with him; Bohemond and Tancred went along, not forgetting Count Robert of Normandy. All four leaders made their way to the palace, each with his sword buckled on his left side. They climbed up to the doors of the main hall and entered. As soon as the Turk [Datien's brother] caught sight of them, he yelled out: 'Whoever let you in has been plotting treachery! Alas! Lord Garsion! Today is the day you lose your city!' The leaders were not pleased to hear this. They ran towards him, battered him to the ground with their fists and bound his eyes with a blindfold; then they took him back out to his brother who was waiting on the steps. When they reached him, they took off the blindfold. Datien addressed his brother as follows.

258

Datien looked at his brother and addressed him in his most winning tones. 'Dear brother, I believe firmly in God, Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I renounce Mohammed and all his tricks. His power is not worth one rotten apple. If you do not serve and worship God, you are making a very stupid mistake.' His pagan brother replied: 'What is this utter nonsense I am hearing? I would not renounce Mohammed even if all of Esclavonia were the reward. You coward! Traitor! Robber! All this is your doing! Alas, Lord Garsion! Your city is betrayed!' When Datien heard this response, he shouted to our leaders: 'My lords, what are you playing at? Whatever you do, don't let him live!' Count Robert of Flanders whipped out his glittering sword and swiped off the brother's head just below his ears, sending it flying down the steps behind him. By now the Christians were ensconced in the well-fortified city. The noble duke of Bouillon was in the meadows outside, lying in wait in a dip in the waste ground in case the Turks decided to make a sortie against the Christian army. He heard not a peep out of our army: no noise, no shouts, no signs of rejoicing. He became uneasy, worried that our Franks might have met a sticky end. He and his company rode up at speed out of the dip and spurred towards the walls of the ancient city. There they found our men downcast and subdued. The ladder lay broken in pieces on the ground in front of them, half of it dangling down the porphyry wall. The noble duke pulled a face when he saw it. 'Men! Where in God's name are Robert of Normandy, my cousin Robert who rules Flanders, Tancred, Bohemond and the other leaders?'

'My noble lord, they have gone up into the fortified part of the city. We know they can't have more than thirty men with them, God help them! – that was how many of us managed to get up the ladder before it frayed and broke under the weight of arms. A Turk from Esclavonia was waiting for them up on the walls. He led our men away with him and we have heard nothing since.'

'My God!' replied the duke, 'they have all met a horrible end. Alas! – if only I had been with them. My faith in God is so strong that it would have been enough

to prevent their deaths; I would have put paid to even 20,000 Turks.' He wept and lamented; there was not much for him to laugh about.

259

Godfrey of Bouillon was extremely upset. He had an urgent message sent to the army immediately, telling them to put on their armour and take up weapons: there had been heavy losses and help was badly needed. The messenger made his way to the army of Our Lord to tell them the news. As you can imagine, this created consternation. Everyone in the army prepared to the best of his ability. Now let me tell you about the soldiers so beloved by God who were in the city with its paved ramparts. They were undermining the gate with large sharp stakes. Their Turkish ally Datien went up onto the rampart and shouted down to those outside: 'Gentlemen, come quickly! Go straight to the gate and enter the city at the double. Your companions are all unharmed and in good heart.'

'May you be praised, Lord God!' said the duke. He led all his companions up to the gate while the Turk, their godsend, shinned down from the wall. Enguerrand of St-Pol had gone to the palace; he was the fourteenth among the brave men whom Datien had guided to it. They found 100 Turks asleep and beheaded every last one. They raised a banner up on a turret showing the arms of Bohemond blazoned with a golden cross: that served as a sign that the city was taken. The rest of the soldiers set to work with a will and dug out all the walkways leading to the gate; they flung all the crossbars down behind them. By the time day broke and dawn appeared all the metal bars of the main gate had been cut; the doors were opened and flung back. The noble duke of Bouillon was the first to enter along with all his companions and the other leaders. By the time the sun came up there were 10,000 of them inside the city. The Turks were still sound asleep suspecting nothing. They posted large garrisons in the six towers held by Datien.

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By the time the sun rose and began to shine, there were more than 13,000 Franks inside [the city]. Their first priority was to garrison the six towers that had been [Datien]'s responsibility, and they fixed silken banners on top of them. The Christians saw them from their tents and were overjoyed. In response you might have heard bugles being sounded and calling whilst the soldiers took up their arms and equipment. The main body of the army marched out tightly packed and formed into ranks. Lord Raymond of St-Gilles provided the rearguard; he had the sick carried with them, help they badly needed. They made good speed all the way up to the city and marched straight in: God guard them against any opposition! You might have heard yells and shouts of 'Montjoie!' They fell on the Saracens, giving them a rude awakening. 'Arise, arise! Raise the hue and cry,

Mohammed! We are staring disaster in the face. Alas, Lord Garsion, you have left it too late. Your city is taken without a single arrow shot or lance thrust!' There was enormous commotion and hubbub on all sides. Imagine our soldiers ranging through Antioch, killing pagans and slicing off their limbs, knocking one sprawling on top of another! All their swords were stained with blood and brains, and the paths ran with the blood that flowed from Saracen bodies.⁴²² Picture the distress of beautiful Saracen maidens on all sides, wringing their hands and tearing their hair, calling desperately on Mohammed and Apollon to curse the Franks who were attacking their people: 'These devils are wreaking havoc in our homeland!' The Saracens and pagans managed to rally themselves, to the point where 30,000 started to fight back. Had you been there you would have seen a vicious slaughter: countless heavy lances shattered and countless shields pierced; countless mailed hoods torn and hauberks ripped; countless Saracens shooting arrows from their bows of horn, striking and throwing javelins and darts, pulling out their spears and rushing forward and plunging them in, hitting and pounding with maces and leaden cudgels. They left the earth strewn with dead and injured. The battle lasted for the entire day, through the evening and up to dusk the following day. You can say without fear of contradiction that it was a massive bloodbath.

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The battle was immense: it did not finish for two days or indeed two nights either. Garsion came down from the main citadel and joined the battle, bringing 10,000 Turks with him each armed with a Turkish bow and arrows. Garsion came to a halt in the main street, where he found the Franks and mounted a fierce assault against them. Each Turk did his utmost to put up a good fight, and they pushed our Franks back to a junction with a side street. The Turks up in the towers inflicted heavy losses on them. Godfrey of Bouillon shouted orders loudly: 'Gentlemen and noble Christians, abandon your positions; the enemy are growing too strong for us.' Picture Robert of Flanders making his way up; with him were Count Hugh [of St-Pol], who hated pagans with a vengeance, and his valiant son Enguerrand, Tancred, and Bohemond with the troops at his command. They had taken four of the main streets some time before: that was where they killed the Turks, of whom none escaped. The blood of every single Frank was up at seeing this battle. There was a general cry: 'By the Holy Sepulchre, brothers! This much is clear: anyone who does not put up a good show now will damage his reputation for ever. Everybody can keep what he takes. Those who know what is good for them will get stuck into the pagans.' Enguerrand of St-Pol needed no urging. He spurred

⁴²² Although the details of the sack of Antioch are vividly imagined, the reality was as violent and destructive: *GF*, pp. 47–8, elaborated by *RM*, pp. 147–8; *FC*, p. 99; *RC*, pp. 91–2; *AA*, pp. 281–5; *RA*, pp. 47–8. The language may be formulaic but the horror of the massacre is evident here and in other accounts.

forward past the main mass of our people and made for the strongest part of the Turkish forces to launch an attack. He made extremely good use of the spear he was brandishing, killing Garsion's nephew before his very eyes and knocking five Turks flying before the spear broke. Then he drew his sword out of its scabbard with a flourish and pursued Bredalant, cutting off his head. Garsion of Antioch flung a billhook at him that caught his horse and went right through its flanks. The horse went down stone dead but Enguerrand leapt to his feet. Gripping his sword and holding his shield firmly, he charged towards the pagans, undaunted by any of them, and rained huge blows on them with his glittering blade. But he had gone too far in among the pagans to be able to turn back unless Jesus, creator of the whole world, spared him a thought. You can be sure that our men were appalled when they realised his situation. 'By the Holy Sepulchre!' they yelled, advancing as one. The consequences of not rescuing Enguerrand would be very serious.

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The attempt to rescue Enguerrand turned into a bloodbath. Countless lances were broken and countless shields smashed, countless hauberks ripped and countless mailed hoods torn apart, countless Saracens killed, mutilated and slaughtered. This combat left 1,100 dead. Wicher the Swabian unsheathed his glittering sword and, brandishing it, made for Corbanel, lord of Lutis. He sliced down right through into his neck. Garsion was very upset at the sight. He wished fervently that he was back up the hill in his vaulted palace. He swung his horse round and retreated, accompanied by the pagans. Imagine how demoralised they felt. Up in the palace husbands were abandoning wives and lovers their ladies without so much as a farewell. The Franks forced them into the main bailey [of the citadel]. The pagans turned and made a stand at that spot. There was another bloody skirmish, with the Turks shooting arrows from their horn bows down from the vaulted towers and inflicting heavy losses on our people both in front and at the rear. This, as you can imagine, made our men angry and agitated. Picture the King of the Tafurs coming forward, furiously angry, and the white-haired Lord Peter the Hermit accompanied by 10,000 fearless ruffians. The King of the Tafurs shouted in a voice that was heard far and wide: 'Bohemond of Sicily, my valiant and noble lords and the rest of you whom God has blessed – make sure you don't let the Turks escape now you have penned them up here. I am going to give you on a plate all those who are sniping down at you from this vaulted palace, dead or alive.' At this, picture his ruffianly force with their blood up for the attack. They flung missiles and large dark rocks; they battered down the doors with big well-balanced hammers; they scaled up ladders over the ramparts and swarmed into the palace in more than thirty places. Of the pagans they left in their wake, every single one was injured or dead. The ruffians took the towers, the walls and the defences. Inside they killed 1,500 pagans and took their pleasure in raping the highly attractive Saracen

women.⁴²³ This displeased Jesus, King of Paradise. Some Turks did manage to escape through a postern gate and fled towards the main citadel built up on an outcrop of virgin rock.⁴²⁴

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The followers of the King of the Tafurs achieved considerable success, being the first to take eight of the main towers. Not that the other soldiers hung back: they attacked the Turks mercilessly. 'We cannot congratulate ourselves,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'whilst those greedy double-crossing [Turks] hold out against us. Frankly I'd rather lose my life in this battle than fail to empty out this whole bailey.' Yelling 'By the Holy Sepulchre!' he rallied the Franks and charged at the pagans waving his steel sword. He smashed King Bricebalt's ridged helmet; the gold band round it was about as much use as an olive twig, and he cut him in half right down to his horse.⁴²⁵ Seeing this seriously infuriated the pagans, but not one of them dared face up to the Franks. They turned and fled for good. Some had their loves, sisters or wives there and left them to fend for themselves in sheer terror of death. The Christians, whom God loved and cherished, followed hard on their heels. They left the ground strewn with dead and injured, taking the pursuit all the way to the main citadel. You might have seen hordes of beautiful pagan women beside themselves, wringing their hands and tearing their hair, calling desperately on Mohammed and Apollon: 'Alas, Lord Mohammed, come to our aid!' In an attempt to lengthen his days Garsion fled and made for the lofty citadel up on a towering rocky outcrop which was as high as a bowshot is long. The Eskinant Gate there was made by devils who built and crafted it; they had the tower built by one of their workmen, Cerberus, the guardian of Hell: keeping its gates was his job.⁴²⁶ It was there that the Turks toppled off the rocks, suffering terrible injuries; anyone who fell off the cliff tumbled straight down into Hell with no hope of appeal.⁴²⁷

⁴²³ As before, the atrocities committed by the Christian army are blamed solely on the Tafurs and explicitly condemned as not meeting with divine approval; see Introduction, chapter 3.

⁴²⁴ The Turks who had taken refuge in the citadel were to cause endless trouble for the Christians trapped in Antioch: see RM, p. 157 for a vivid explanation. The following *laisse* explains its strategic significance.

⁴²⁵ See note to *laisse* 161: as elsewhere the *Antioche* repeats a particularly striking exploit.

⁴²⁶ A rare classical reference.

⁴²⁷ This is found only in AA (pp. 284–5).

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The rock on which Garsion's citadel stood was massive: it was as high as a soldier could shoot, unworked and of dark stone. At the Eskinant Gate, built by Noiron the denizen of Hell, there was a high cliff and a very steep slope; that was where the stone for the keep had been quarried. Here the sheer weight of numbers meant that large numbers of Turks lost their footing and fell; although they were seeking sanctuary terrified of death, anyone who fell had no hope of recovery in this world. Garsion was up in the main living quarters with 10,000 Turks and Esclavons. The citadel was heavily garrisoned with an ample supply of all kinds of weapons, meaning that its inhabitants were about as worried about an attack as they would have been about a baby; moreover they had indubitably good access both to the fields outside and to the city itself, leaving them able to come and go as they pleased. Now may God spare a thought for the Franks! They had conquered Antioch and were safely inside, but there were precious few supplies: the Turks had run them down during the Christian siege. 'By the love of God, gentlemen,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'I suggest we send word to those of our forces still camped outside; many of our fine tents are still pitched and we still have plenty of sick people out there as well as a fair bit of our equipment. By God's love we need, my lords, to give some thought to bringing all that into the city.'

'You are absolutely right,' said Duke Bohemond. 'Let us ask Robert of Normandy to go along with the count of Flanders and his companions, the bishop of Le Puy who preaches to us, and the lion-hearted Hugh of St-Pol.'

'Blessed be God!' replied the leaders.

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The [designated] leaders set off at once and made straight for the encampment. They had all the sick people they could find carefully carried into Antioch; then they had all the equipment packed and loaded up [onto pack animals] with as much food as they could possibly carry. Arms and tents were all taken into the city. The dead Christians were buried in cemeteries and the bishop commended their souls to God. When the Turks up in the citadel saw all this going on, they would have been happy to slip away – if they had been brave enough to entertain the thought seriously. As it was they left the Christians to come and go in peace. 'My lords,' Garsion said to his men, 'I might be making a very foolish mistake if I wait too long for help which never arrives.' 'You need not worry, my lord,' said Crucados. 'I can see a large cloud up above that mountain range. In my opinion that is the relieving army ready to strike terror. You will see them making camp here before midday tomorrow.' And he was absolutely right (may God defeat them utterly!). The Turks were already marching down the Escoler valley, with an estimated force

numbering some three million.⁴²⁸ Our noble Christians (Jesus protect them!) had taken all the dead Turks out of Antioch, flinging them into charnel heaps outside and covering them up to stop them stinking the place out. Large numbers of pagan women were led to the font and baptised, professing themselves willing to believe in God and worship him with all their hearts.⁴²⁹ Neither was Datien the Turk forgotten. He had himself raised to new life in the baptismal font by the bishop, along with his son whom he adored. The Franks had Mass sung in the churches and the Host blessed and consecrated. However, they had little respite: they had to go to a lot of trouble fending off repeated pagan attacks which forced them to take up arms.

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Antioch was taken on Wednesday night: the following day, Thursday, saw everything fall into the hands of the Christians.⁴³⁰ However, they found very few of the supplies they needed. The Turks who had occupied the citadel kept them constantly on the run: they attacked the Christians in large numbers at night, leaving them as blackened corpses. Many met their deaths; things could not go on like this. [They fought on] regardless of the grief of their friends.

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Very early one Friday morning the Turks came down out of their large square tower. Each of them wore a helmet to protect his head as much as possible. They fell on our Christians stealthily and unexpectedly; they inflicted serious damage on those defending side roads, and the damage would have been worse had not

⁴²⁸ Ridiculous exaggeration even by the standards of the *chanson de geste*: ms C puts the numbers at a slightly more modest one million. The eyewitnesses give no numbers; RC has 400,000 (p. 96). All are dwarfed, however, by the *Destruction de Rome*, where the Saracens number 10 million (*La destruction de Rome: version de Hanovre*, ed. L. Formisano (Florence, 1981), v. 223). See also note to *laisse 2*.

⁴²⁹ The theme of the beautiful Saracen princess who falls in love and converts to Christianity is frequent in the *chanson de geste*: see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 735–87. *Fierabras* centres on the development of Floripas' feelings for her Christian captives and ultimate killing of their jailer: see E. M. Warren, 'The Enamoured Moslem Princess in Orderic Vitalis and the French Epic', *PMLA*, 29 (1914), pp. 341–58; Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 771–92; and for a more recent perspective, S. Kinoshita, 'The politics of courtly love: *La Prise d'Orange* and the conversion of the Saracen Queen', *RR*, 86 (1995), pp. 265–87.

⁴³⁰ This is accurate since the battle of Antioch was on Monday 28 June. However, it does not fit the assertion at *laisse 305* that the battle was on a Friday (the day of the week Christ was crucified). RM is not the source here as he does not specify the day of the week.

the news been quickly spread. All our soldiers came spurring up at top speed and forced the Turks to retreat by the strength of their attack. There was a strongly fortified gate in front of the main bailey with a square tower on each side. It was there that those Turkish bastards made a desperate stand. There was an extremely fierce attack with much bellowing. When the Saracens realised that they were not going to be able to hold out, they retreated back into the citadel and our men turned and left. Three soldiers from the land of salvation died there; the army of God was plunged into grief for them.

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By now our Franks were feeling pretty angry and miserable. Ever since they had taken Antioch the Great, the Turks who had taken refuge in the main citadel had attacked them relentlessly. There was not a single leader or prince, no matter how strong or powerful or nobly born or proudly arrayed, whether Flemish or Berrichon, Breton or Norman, who did not find himself putting on his mailed hauberk and lacing his glittering gold helmet on his head each day; the stinking Saracens attacked them ceaselessly, and in the press of battle they trampled several under their feet. One day, as they looked towards the rising sun, they saw a cloud spiralling upwards into the sky – the sort of dust raised by swift warhorses. ‘Let me tell you what I think,’ they muttered to each other. ‘If you ask me, that is the emperor [of Constantinople] riding to our aid.’

‘No it isn’t,’ replied others; ‘don’t be stupid. Those troops are from Persia and belong to the emir. They are coming to lay siege to us, and it will be no picnic.’ These latter were absolutely right. The pagans were riding towards them in a state of high exhilaration. Their leader was Corbaran, whose men they were. In his army were Arabs and Persians, all the Almoravids and the Publicans; Turks, and Medes full of fighting spirit; along with them came people from Samaria and all the Agulani. These last are a strong and proud people, fiercely determined to win; they carry no arms other than a sharp sword and are covered with iron all round. Let me tell you something amazing about their horses. They cannot bear any rider to carry a lance, shield or billowing pennant, and they give short shrift to any who does.⁴³² The vanguard spurring on ahead of the main force caught sight of the keep of Antioch at the top of the precipice. The princes took up a position behind it and waited for the rest of their forces to come up. When the wicked pagans were all assembled Corbaran called them to attention and addressed them: ‘Our scouts have galloped off to the city, and we shall follow them at a slower pace. If we can

⁴³¹ This *laisse* marks the start of extensive translation from RM.

⁴³² This rather strange comment elaborates the description of the Agulani in *GF*, p. 49. The text may be translating RM, though Robert says the Agulani did not *even* carry swords (p. 150). See also note to *laisse* 218 above.

manage to entice these fools out of the city, we can cut off their heads and they will be defenceless against us.'

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The infidel pagans came to a halt at this spot. Once they had come into sight of Antioch, Corbaran called them to attention and expounded as follows. 'Well, Lord Sansadoine, what has become of the people who arrogantly marched into our lands? I cannot see a single tent or pavilion or bivouac; no palfreys, no warhorses and no golden pennants. If you ask me they have all fled back to their own country. When they heard about me and my reputation they were too scared to wait: they all went scurrying home!' Soliman listened to all this and replied: 'If anyone else said that, it would be proven false. Even if we had brought four times as many people, the Christians would not retreat as much as half a bowshot. Death or victory, that is their motto!'

'You pathetic loser,' said Corbaran, 'You have shown your true colours. Their sword attacks have totally demoralised you. By the faith I have observed so long, if I can just get my hands on them up hill or down dale, they will regret the day they ever tried attacking and laying waste our land: every last one will have his head cut off.'

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'My lord,' said Sansadoine, 'enough of that. Threats are pretty idle if they cannot be carried through. Last night I had a dream that left me feeling very uneasy. I dreamt in the darkness before dawn that we had to make camp outside Antioch. I made my way to the gate that faces out to sea and shouted loudly to be allowed in. Two bears and two lions came to unbar the door, and that scared me so much that I did not dare stay. Standing right next to the tall tower I started to raise my eyes: as I did so I saw it topple forwards, and out of Antioch poured leopards, boars, snakes, bears and dragons all about to devour our people. They were so strong that they forced us to turn and flee. Anyone they managed to catch had no chance to challenge them: on the contrary not one person escaped alive. I saw our people crushed and dying. I saw the earth gape open right in front of us, so deep that you could not see to the bottom. It left me so afraid that I cannot bear to tell you any more.'⁴³³

⁴³³ This mirrors Bohemond's dream in *laisse* 235 about the taking of Antioch. Snakes and dragons are often symbols of evil: this makes sense from Sansadoine's point of view but is an odd way to describe Christians fighting with the approval of God. This may also refer, anachronistically, to heraldic devices.

‘My lord,’ said Soliman, ‘you should not lose too much sleep over it. Mohammed who has us in his protection is very powerful. Anyone who gives up on a course of action because of a dream deserves nothing but contempt.’ With these words they ended their discussion.

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When the noble Sansadoine had finished recounting his dream and Soliman of Nicaea had reassured him, they wasted no more time. They immediately turned their attention towards Antioch and saw a messenger hurrying at top speed towards them down a paved road, his camel dripping with sweat from the pace.⁴³⁴ ‘Now we shall find out how our countrymen in Antioch are really getting on,’ they said to each other. Picture the messenger. He launched in as soon as he saw Corbaran: ‘My lord, help the men whom you have left to their fate! Antioch is lost. The Franks are in control. But we do still have our main citadel, and King Garsion is still alive and well.’ Corbaran roared with laughter when he heard this. ‘By Mohammed!’ he said. ‘The Franks have issued their challenge. Now I am going to lay siege to them with my noble forces. I am not going to give up as long as I live until I have overpowered and taken every last one. Even their noblest barons will finding themselves marched off in chains to my far-off kingdom in Persia for the sultan to do what he likes with them.’

‘My lord,’ commented Sansadoine, ‘the way things have turned out you have come on the scene very late – you have held back too long. There is no way we can recover our position.’

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On hearing a reliable messenger tell him how things really stood, Corbaran’s response was to say: ‘By Mohammed, the Franks have had it. I shall not retreat as long as I live until I have taken them prisoner and made them do my bidding.’ At this his young knights split off from the army, spoiling to show their valour, and made for Antioch at top speed. ‘My lords,’ cried one of them, ‘let’s not hang around. If we can manage to entice those fools out of the city, we can make it very hard for them to get back in.’ Had you been there you could have seen numerous swift warhorses led out into the main parade-ground, and numerous infidel pagans using the stirrup to swing into the saddle, armed with hauberks, helmets and brightly decorated shields, their pennants laced on and billowing in the wind. They were desperate to come face to face with our Franks. Off they

⁴³⁴ A rather nice touch: he is after all a Saracen. Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 999–1001; in *Roland*, Blancandrin offers Charlemagne 700 camels in tribute (v. 129).

spurred towards Antioch: full of enthusiasm now, but by the time the sun set in the evening enthusiasm would have turned to despair.

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So the lightly armed young soldiers rode out from the main army towards Antioch, hoping to provoke a fight. However they were completely unable to entice out any sergeants or knights even though they rode round and about over the battlefield making a great song and dance; imagine hordes of them balancing their lances across their palms, throwing them up into the sky and catching them again by the blade. Now, my lords, let me tell you about a very noble warrior called Roger who came from Barneville. He mounted a swift warhorse and had his arms brought, then rode out of the city to avenge the people of God, followed by three of his close associates; they were keen to see if they could get any spoils from the Turks. When the Turks caught sight of them, they were in no hurry to attack: they had heard the Franks' valour praised so much that the last thing they wanted to do was take on such valiant fighters in joust or combat. So they set up an ambush in a cave. Those in the rear let themselves be insulted and pursued until the Christians had got about a bowshot beyond the hiding-place. Then the Turks surged out behind them, all shouting: 'You may be arrogant but you can't get away this time, you arrogant losers!' Roger flew into a rage when he heard these taunts. He pulled on the reins of his swift warhorse, then realised to his horror that he was caught between two groups of Saracens. He ordered his three companions to ride in front while he brought up the rear to take the brunt of the attack. He grasped his sword with its elmwood hilt; anyone he struck would die instantly. Imagine him wielding it, determined to protect his three companions. The Turks scattered before them like larks before a hawk, too scared to come anywhere near. Roger was managing prodigious feats, and indeed had laid about him so well with his sharp steel sword that he was on the point of being able to break free from the Turks. Little did he know the terrible fate that was about to befall him. His horse came down right in the middle of the path, and that stumble spelt real trouble. Before the noble soldier could get to his feet, he had more than a thousand Turks swarming round him, running with swords drawn ready for the kill. The dukes and princes watched events unfold from inside Antioch, wringing their hands and tearing their hair as they watched him killed and dismembered. More than 10,000, sergeants and squires alike, were reduced to tears at the realisation that the Turks had managed to score a victory against our people. In short order Roger's head was impaled on a sharp stick and carried to Corbaran, preening arrogantly in the middle of his army.⁴³⁵

⁴³⁵ Roger's martyrdom is not in *GF*, but is in *RM*, p. 151; *AA*, pp. 288–9; and *RA*, p. 49. *RM* and *AA* both have the detail about impaling Roger's head on a stake.

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The Turks carried the head back to their army. Corbaran eyed it closely: his delight was all too evident. Now his army formed into tightly ordered ranks and made camp round Antioch the same day. Imagine the number of tents which were erected, pavilions and shelters and gilded pinnacles. The tent of a very noble Turk, famous far and wide, was erected next to the Iron Bridge. The infidels knew him as Sansadoine, son of the Garsion who had his head cut off.⁴³⁶ Before the city had fallen to the Franks, Sansadoine had slipped out by night and ridden under cover all the way to the emir of another country. When he got there, he begged for support: 'Alas, my lord emir! Our destiny is indeed a wretched one! My father is murdered and my city taken. All this is the doing of the Franks, a nation of infidels. They have taken Romania and left it devastated; they have destroyed its strongholds and enslaved its people. There is absolutely no question: unless we decide how to face the situation, they will take the renowned city of Jerusalem!' Sansadoine made his case so elegantly that the emir mustered his great army; not one man able to bear weapons or buckle on a sword was left unconscribed all the way to the Arctic. He summoned Corbaran and issued orders as follows: 'You will be in charge of this army and will carry my banner. Take Brohadas with you as agreed by popular acclaim. I charge you to look after him well; that is my only concern.'

'My lord,' replied Corbaran, 'your command will be obeyed.' The forces made such good speed up hill and down dale that they were soon encamped in the fields outside Antioch.

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The Turks lost no time getting their camp set up. Corbaran sat outside his tent fanned by the breeze. Sansadoine called out to him and came to have a deferential word. 'Ah, my lord Corbaran, a moment of your time. My father has indeed sent for your help; he has promised you plenty of red gold and pale silver, and agreed to hold all his ferts from you in future. His city is lost, and that grieves me beyond measure. If you will help me take revenge, I shall follow his example and happily declare myself your man.'

'My friend,' replied Corbaran, 'let me tell you what I am really after. If you give me the tower that guards the mountainside, I shall give you as much revenge as you want.'

⁴³⁶ Garsion has not yet had his head cut off. It happens in *laisse* 370. This *laisse* is very odd, apparently referring to a different version in which Garsion is killed fleeing Antioch as in AA (pp. 286–7), and clumsily summarising the earlier embassy of Sansadoine and sending of Corbaran to help. Duparc-Quioç suggests that much of this *laisse* reflects an earlier version of the poem, although the reference to Brohadas seems out of place if so (*Edition*, p. 333).

'My lord,' said Sansadoine, 'I agree on these terms. If the city falls, I shall willingly hand the tower over to you. If you cannot take the city we are in deep trouble: you and all your associates will have to flee from this land. If [the Franks] manage to withstand you, they will have no fear of any race: they will push all the way to the East without stopping, and then if you ask me they will go on and take Damascus. Jerusalem will be defenceless against them.' Corbaran nearly burst a blood vessel at this. 'By Mohammed to whom I bow down,' he riposted, 'if I cannot manage to take the city or kill and rout this pathetic race of losers, then I won't be needing either the tower or any other fortress. Provided I am spared long enough to see it, they will regret the day they ever came to Syria. They will all suffer an excruciatingly painful death.'

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Agreement was reached and the discussion concluded. Provided Corbaran could avenge him on his deadly enemies, Sansadoine would give him the tower and the vaulted palace. Now picture this.⁴³⁷ A Turk who was a close associate of Corbaran found a lance lying in the undergrowth, plus a sword with no sheath and a badly damaged blade, covered with rust, bloodstained and blackened; the scabbard that enclosed it was half rotted away. Corbaran examined these and roared with laughter. 'Tell me, brother, wherever did you find these weapons?'

'My lord, they belong to those arrogant wretches who took Rum and its fortresses, seized the walls and palaces of Antioch and deprived our noble compatriots of their prize possessions.'

'My friend,' replied Corbaran, 'in faith take it from me – I think the people who thought they could conquer our land with weapons like that are complete fools and losers. By Mohammed my God who looks after me, they will regret the day they ever came to Syria if I am spared long enough to see it!'

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That particular joke had run its course. Corbaran had the chaplain summoned whose job was to write his letters and dispatches. 'Brother,' he said, 'find ink and parchment as quickly as you can and get down to work. I want you to send word to the apostolic caliph, the widely respected head of our faith, and to the noble and royal sultan our overlord. Start both letters with expressions of greeting

⁴³⁷ The rusty weapons, the summoning of Saracen kings and the long dialogue between Corbaran and his mother are all found in *GF* (pp. 51–6) and closely followed in related texts GN, pp. 95–8; BB, pp. 60–64; RM, pp. 153–7. See Bancourt's comments on the contrast with the *Aspremont*, which insists on the splendour of Christian arms (*Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 236–9). This version is translated from RM.

and friendship. Then write in accordance with my instructions, explaining that we have trapped those losers from Europe in Antioch and they cannot escape. When I left him to come here, [the noble sultan] made it very clear I was to kill these losers and tear them limb from limb. I intend to carry out his command to the letter. Write on the wax too that he need have no worries: if I can get the noblest among them into chains, my lord will be able to stamp his power the more strongly. If he can manage to get the brother of the king of France, Count Hugh of Vermandois, into his dungeon, he can indulge his whims by going to taunt him, mock and trick him and have some fun; then if he feels like it he can have him killed and decapitated.⁴³⁸ It is entirely appropriate that we should try and enslave people who wanted to enslave us and take our country. Tell my lord the sultan, whom I revere deeply, that he should have a soak in the bath and take plenty of rest in his private apartments; he should go for a relaxing swim or two in the river; and he should give serious thought to siring large numbers of children – one day he will no longer be with us, and if the Franks ever came back to conquer our lands they would be needed to protect and save them. I think I shall never live it down to my dying day if I cannot deliver all of Rum into his hands or succeed in winning him Bulgaria and Syria.' According to the tale as I have heard it told, Corbaran's mother came for an urgent word with her son. Here is the pep talk she gave him.

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'Listen to me for a moment or two, my handsome son,' said his mother. 'You are my comfort, my heart's delight and the centre of all my thoughts; all my joy and everything I love is vested in you. I was in my capital city of Aleppo when a well-armed messenger came hurrying to seek me out.'⁴³⁹ He said that you had summoned all your forces to arms and that you were instructed to take on the Franks. I have come post-haste to find out whether that is true.'

'Madam,' said Corbaran, 'you can see with your own eyes that it is. That is what the sultan, your liege-lord, desires.'

'I am appalled, my handsome son,' said his mother. 'Who does this dreadful man think he is? Whoever told you this was a sensible thing to do, handsome son? The Franks have the mightiest God you will ever see: that is what Scripture says and it does not lie. I have some of the best of the Franks locked away in my dungeons; one of them, a very shrewd man, is called Richard; another is the bishop of Forez along with two priests.'⁴⁴⁰ They have complete faith in the King

⁴³⁸ Hugh, not prominent in the rest of the text, is picked out in this section translated from RM (p. 154). For RM's praise of Hugh see discussion in Sweetenham's introduction (RM, p.19).

⁴³⁹ Ms A gives 'Galisse' here; Duparc-Quioic gives the reading of Aleppo from ms D on the grounds that it is closer to RM (*Edition*, p. 339).

⁴⁴⁰ Reference to the 'chétifs' held captive in Oliferne.

of Majesty, proclaiming him the most powerful God of all. My son, you cannot begin to imagine his power. Anyone who intends harm is lost before he starts; any attempt by you to take him on would be utter madness. He defeated Pharaoh and put him to shame, delivering the people of Israel from captivity; they crossed the Red Sea with neither bridge nor ford before [God] drowned the king and all his nobles. He deprived Seon, king of the Almoravids, of his kingdom even though it was his fief, and dispossessed him of Eon and Canaan, then gave them to his own allies.⁴⁴¹ As for these Christians, he has protected them and guarded them so well that, no matter how powerful the people they take on, they conquer them on the battlefield and defeat them. This race has arisen in the West; they are on their way to come and take our lands and possessions.' Corbaran nearly went berserk on hearing this. Listen to how he replied to his mother:

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'Madam,' said Corbaran, 'I have listened to you for quite long enough. You talk like a madwoman. Evil spirits have possessed you. Let us hope my god Mohammed can help you get your thoughts in better order. Do you honestly think these people holed up [in Antioch] are going to be able to do us even a penny's worth of damage? In hardly any time they will be desperate with hunger. I have more emirs from home than the entire force they have brought with them. Inside the city are Count Hugh who has been carrying the banner; Tancred and the renowned Bohemond; and Duke Godfrey with his sharp sword. They are made of flesh and blood like us. Iron and steel would cow them, no question.'

'My handsome son,' said his mother, 'nobody would disagree with that. [But] those men shut up in Antioch are extraordinarily lucky. They have a Lord who loves them so much that, no matter how powerful the people they take on, they defeat and humble them on the battlefield. Now let me implore you by the faith you have always observed, come away with me back to our land. As for the war massing here, leave it to its own devices. Only a madman would act so arrogantly towards God.' Corbaran's face changed colour when he heard this.

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'Madam,' said Corbaran, 'you have said more than enough. I cannot wait to give battle. I would not shy away from it for the whole army mustered by this land.'

'My handsome son,' said his mother, 'you are breaking my heart. I know for certain that you will not be killed in battle, but your fortunes will change for the worse before the year ends. Now at the court of our king your every whim is catered to and you are feted and loved as the most popular man there. If you are

⁴⁴¹ Seon was the first of the kings overcome by Moses and Joshua (Joshua 12).

defeated now, you will pass into a shameful old age. The popularity and respect you enjoy now will be far outweighed by the insults and dishonour to come. My son, you have with you Turks and Almoravids, Medes and Persians, Syrians and men from Luitis; your summons has gone out to the furthest reaches of the Orient and not a single man with any pretensions to valour has failed to respond. In contrast the kingdom of the Franks is a small one. If you are defeated and overthrown by them now, you will spend the rest of your life too abject to face up to even a lightly armed man. You will be just like a hare fleeing across scrubland when the hounds give tongue and chase, running away from the Franks and their burnished swords.⁴⁴² At this Corbaran just about exploded with rage.

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‘Madam,’ said Corbaran, ‘you are raving like a lunatic. You can stop your sermon right there; it has gone on too long already. I do not believe there is any race in the world powerful enough to disprove my boast – if they want to meet me on the battlefield they will be unable to stand up to the punishment.’

‘My handsome son,’ replied the old woman, ‘you need to know what our ancestors foretold more than a century ago: a race would come from the West and conquer our lands by sheer determined bravery. That is what the prophet said, and it is true in every particular. They will go all the way to the East without stopping; the world will be shaken by a number of disasters. The stars and all the elements are wavering in their courses. That is why I think the time foretold is now upon us.’

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‘My handsome son,’ said his mother, ‘I believe the day is at hand. A good century ago our forebears prophesied that a race would come from the land of our ancestors and conquer our lands by dint of their strength and energy. The people shut up in there [Antioch] are surpassingly brave because they have a Lord who loves them. Taking them on would be sheer folly. Ever since I was told, sitting up in my highest tower, that you were having your pagan forces summoned, I have pursued my enquiries ceaselessly and several people have confirmed that you would not die in the battle, my handsome and wonderful son, but that before the year is out I would be grieving at what was happening to you.’

‘Madam,’ said Corbaran, ‘stop worrying. Even if I were given the fief that the emperor holds in Upper India, that would not be enough to stop me taking them on

⁴⁴² Simile translated from RM (p. 156).

if I possibly can.⁴⁴³ When his mother heard this her apprehension only deepened. She sought leave to depart and returned [home].

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Corbaran's mother took her leave and returned to her own kingdom, carrying with her as many possessions as she could lay hands on; nothing which remained was safe. Meanwhile Corbaran and his forces stayed put. Now let us hear about the Franks in the city and how they had been getting on in the meantime. They were under heavy pressure up near the citadel. Every single leader and prince had put on a hauberk and laced on a gold bejewelled helmet. Each day saw a long hard battle right in front of the gate of the citadel, with the Turks inflicting heavy casualties. If only God would take pity on our army! Very few of our men were killed or injured, but every night saw them keeping watch, sitting on their horses fully armed. They suffered an astonishing amount of pain and deprivation. It is absolutely true to say that before long our Christian army suffered such famine that even the richest of them was reduced to a pauper.

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Our Lord's people suffered such a time of scarcity that even the very richest went hungry. The princes soon felt serious ill effects; their bodies became weak as did their warhorses, whilst the rank and file were completely desperate. They raced to pull up plants by the roots just as they were, leaving neither leaf nor root uneaten. If anyone could lay hands on raw donkey thigh it cost him 60 shillings and not a penny less, with the lucky purchaser needing all his bargaining powers.⁴⁴⁴ Anyone in a position to buy a small loaf was happy to pay a whole bezant of pure gold. They skinned donkeys, horses, and mules, boiling and roasting the flesh so they

⁴⁴³ A reference to Prester John, the legendary ruler of the kingdom of Upper India. The myth began in an apocryphal letter of 1165 to the Emperor Manuel Comnenus that survives in over 250 manuscripts, in which he promised to visit Jerusalem and described his amazing kingdom complete with fountain of youth. His kingdom was fabulously rich, harmonious and just, located next to the earthly Paradise. During the following centuries travellers made many attempts to find it in central Asia, Georgia, China, India and elsewhere, culminating in Ethiopia. For source material see C. Beckingham and B. Hamilton, *Prester John, the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes* (Aldershot, 1996). This note draws on an unpublished paper by Andrew Kurtz given at the 2008 Kalamazoo International Congress on Medieval Studies, 'The search for Prester John and the eroding prestige of Ethiopian kings'.

⁴⁴⁴ We have translated 'sous' as shilling and 'denier' as penny (Latin 'solidus' and 'denarius'). It is well nigh impossible to gain a sense of the value of these coins: F. Gies suggests 50 shillings as top price for a (live) warhorse c.1200: *The Knight in History* (New York, 1984), p. 30.

could eat it; the skin complete with hair was barbecued over an open fire and the sergeants and squires ate it just as it was without bread. Women tried to suckle their infants but there was nothing in the breast to be sucked; the babies closed their eyes and gave up the ghost in sheer desperation. This was what our people went through to protect their faith and to win their way to Holy Paradise. Now let us hear more about the overweening arrogance of Corbaran. One particular day he ordered his troops to arm themselves and make their way to the gates to damage us by damaging them; he had built a strong fortification nearby. Our men made a sortie to relieve their miserable position. However, our noble knights were so weak that they could not withstand the ferocious press of battle. As they tried to get back in through the gate there was commotion and hubbub with the Turks, vigorous and lightly armed, chasing behind. If only God, Judge of all, comes to the aid of the army! As it was, our men did not lose even as much as one pack animal's worth. They slammed and bolted the gate behind them and dismounted from their horses to cool down. As you can imagine, our men were seriously demoralised by this. Many fled by night in search of bread; they tied ropes round the battlements high on the wall and slid down them to the flat ground beneath, then fled to the sea to seek out the sailors.⁴⁴⁵ 'How goes it with the forces of God?' the latter asked. 'Matters could not be worse,' the fugitives replied. 'They have run out of the provisions they need and they are all going to die. There is no chance of survival.' Those in charge of the ships did not wait to hear more. They put out to sea with the aim of getting as far away as possible. My lords, now I should like to tell you a little about Count Stephen. He was a noble soldier who had a high reputation in the army for his shrewd advice. Before our men had been able to settle themselves in Antioch behind the protection of its high walls, he was struck down with an illness that was so bad that he could not ride and had to retire to a castle where he could rest and recover.⁴⁴⁶

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The count was seriously weakened by his illness, and had to recuperate in a castle he owned. Once he recovered he forgot all the rules of decent behaviour. He heard reports from the fugitives [from Antioch]: 'Our men are in a sorry state; they are suffering badly from hunger and thirst.' He went up all by himself onto a watchtower from where he could see the walls and the main tower of Antioch. Outside he saw Corbaran and the troops from Persia. He hurried back to his

⁴⁴⁵ These 'rope-dancers' are named in *GF*, pp. 56–7; *RC*, pp. 101–2; *AA*, pp. 305–6, 311–12, but not in *RM* or the *Antioche*, indicating the *chanson*'s source material.

⁴⁴⁶ The *Antioche* cheerfully ignores the previous episodes where Stephen's cowardice has been displayed, with only ms G commenting 'par l'ost estoit tenus pour recreant lanier' ('he was considered a total coward by the army'). This is because at this point the text follows *RM*, who is less convinced of Stephen's cowardice (p. 158).

quarters, hastily gathered his belongings and set off straight for the well-fortified city of Constantinople, completely indifferent to the fate of the knights of Our Lord. They had been sure that he would never forget about them and would bring reinforcements to help fight off their hated opponents. But now may God, Son of the Virgin Mary, come to their aid – they will not be seeing Stephen again this side of the flowers Easter brings! Stephen arrived at Philomelium as dawn broke. He found the emperor and his highest nobles there, and called them together in a council where he gave them the following unpalatable report: 'My lord and true emperor, let me tell you straight away that our forces have indeed taken Antioch, but they are under constant attack from [the Turks] in the citadel. Corbaran and his massive army are drawn up outside. All [the Christians] are either dead already or will soon be dead.' This news hardly plunged the emperor into great joy, and the report immediately spread throughout the army.

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The news of what had happened was carried through the whole army in an instant. One of the knights who heard it, a brave man feared by his enemies, was a great friend and confidant of Bohemond; his name rendered in our language was Guy.⁴⁴⁷ His valour and great generosity meant that he was prized and liked by the emperor. When he heard this news, he was deeply upset and angry; indeed he was so griefstricken that he fell to the ground in a dead faint. Once he had recovered from his faint, he wrung his white hands and tore his hair, crying at the top of his voice that he was the world's unhappiest man. 'Alas, God of Glory and Lord in Majesty! Now what is to become of your noble forces who passed through here? It is for you that they have conquered castles and cities, yet now you have allowed them to be defeated. Alas, Lord Bohemond, strong and noble knight that you were, you were the flower of chivalry and the most popular of them all. Your hallmarks were wisdom and valour and great generosity. You were the one who gave good advice to the poor. How could the Saracens possibly ever have dared to rain blows on such a redoubtable body! If you have been killed then it is wrong that I am still alive now that the earth will decay your mouth and handsome nose, your eyes and face, your sides and your ribs. Alas, God of Glory, where is your power now? My heart is overwhelmed with grief and rage and despair. If what this man says is true, I am flung into total confusion. How will the Holy Sepulchre be delivered from the pagans now? They will be left in peace to enjoy their lands and estates. My lords and noble knights who weep in sympathy with me and you, most upright emperor, listen to my words. I would not have wished for the sake of any man ever

⁴⁴⁷ Guy has already appeared in *laissses* 38–45 defusing tensions between the emperor and the crusaders at Constantinople; he was in the emperor's service according to AC (pp. 188–91, 406–10, 420). The *Antioche* here follows RM (pp. 159–60); this explains the inconsistency in reintroducing Guy as if he were a completely new character.

born to see our noble forces so abominably treated. If he had met the Saracens and people from far and wide across the Orient on the battlefield before the forces who passed through here had been so shamefully killed and destroyed and worsted, he would have exacted a bitter revenge with his razor-sharp sword while our people held the walls and moats. If they have all been killed there will be precious few Turks left alive. My lord and most upright emperor, if you believe my advice Antioch is yours for the taking back.’ But Count Stephen had been so convincing that they were all deceived into the wrong decision. The emperor turned back with his nobles. Guy himself went back with them; you will never see anyone more grieved than him.

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So the emperor retreated back into Byzantine territory, though not without some sharp practice first. He instructed his forces to lay waste the territory of Bulgaria so that if the Turks should happen to launch an attack they would not find any provisions and would go back to the kingdom of Syria.⁴⁴⁸ Enough for the moment of the Turks (may God Incarnate curse them!). I am going to talk now about the people from our rich lands, miserable and angry at their confinement in Antioch and suffering horribly from hunger and thirst. They had run completely out of bread and oats. This wretched existence dragged on for twenty-five days. Unless God, the Ruler of all, spared them a thought they would have only very little time left before total collapse. There was in Antioch a very ancient church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. One calm night the priest was asleep there when Jesus came to him nobly accompanied. The beauty radiating from Him lit up the whole church.⁴⁴⁹

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The priest was asleep after much contemplation and prayer for the people of God. Jesus appeared before him in holy majesty, with St Peter and His mother at His

⁴⁴⁸ Duparc-Quio points out that this rather odd command is faithfully translated from RM’s mistranslation of the *GF* (RM, p. 160; *GF*, p. 65): there is no reason to devastate Bulgaria, and the *GF* is clear that they retreated to Bulgaria following a scorched earth policy as they went (Duparc-Quio, *Etude*, p. 108).

⁴⁴⁹ The start of a run of miraculous events and visions at Antioch. We shall never know how far they reflected mass hallucination induced by hunger and fear, how far they are literary convention to show divine support for the Crusade, or how far they actually influenced events. But they were reported consistently in one form or another as the only conceivable explanation for victory against all the odds: see for example. *GF*, pp. 57–61; Gilo, p. 181; RM, pp. 161–3; FC, pp. 99–100.

side.⁴⁵⁰ The beauty shining from the three of them was so luminous that it outshone the sun at the height of summer. Our Lord addressed the priest courteously. When the priest heard, he stared at Him. 'My Lord, who are you? I do not recognise you.'

'My friend,' Our Lord replied, 'let me tell you the truth. I am He who has power over the world.' When the priest heard this, he bowed deeply and fell at Jesus' feet, begging Him for mercy: 'My Lord, in your infinite goodness help your people. They are in Antioch, desperately unhappy and not knowing which way to turn.'

'My friend,' said Our Lord, 'are you saying you have not realised that I have already been helping them very willingly? It was I who ensured they took Nicaea, a brave city, whose inhabitants had never before come across opponents who could defeat and kill them on the battlefield. It was I who relieved them from the terrible famine they experienced outside Antioch before they took it. It was I who ensured that the city was handed over as they wished. I have willingly suffered with them even though they have disobeyed my commandments repeatedly: they have lain with Christian women, an act of folly; and they have lain with pagan women, which they should never have done.'⁴⁵¹ Our Lady was filled with pity on hearing this. She bowed down to His feet in between Him and St Peter.

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The Mother of God fell at the feet of her Son whom she had suckled. She begged Him with all the persuasion at her command to have mercy on His people and take pity on them, trapped in Antioch as they were in their misery and confusion. 'My Lord,' added St Peter, 'I willingly add my prayers. These your people have served me faithfully. They have won back for me the church built in my honour after a long occupation by the Turks and Almoravids. The angels are delighted and so are the apostles; they wanted to see it back in my possession and now it is they are overjoyed.' Our Lord listened carefully to these words, then addressed the priest again in courteous and earnest tones. 'Go and tell my people that I am sending word through you. They must put all the sins they have committed behind them by going to confession and telling everything to their priest. Within five days they will receive help that will relieve their suffering.' He taught him a response then vanished, returning to Paradise whence He had come. The priest awoke, refreshed after a good sleep. He was overjoyed at his vision and praised the God of eternal truth. He arose as soon as day dawned. Meanwhile the Turks and Almoravids were all hurrying to take up arms, ready for their regular morning attack on our men.

⁴⁵⁰ St Peter was the first bishop of Antioch.

⁴⁵¹ Divine support for the Crusade is spelled out explicitly. The passage is translated from RM. The reference to fornication offers sin as a justification for the suffering of the Crusaders, which was always hard to explain when they enjoy divine favour for their mission.

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The Turks and Almoravids hurried to get ready and converged on the gate already mentioned, ready to give the Franks a hard time; they had placed a strong fortification nearby. You might have heard them blowing bugles and brass horns and raining insults, mocking comments and taunts on our men: 'Sons of whores! Losers! We've got you cornered!' When our men heard this they went to prepare themselves. Those who were able to do so without help mounted their horses, rode to the gate and had it unbarred. There was a fierce skirmish with weapons being drawn and flung; it was, according to what I have been told, about the third hour of the day. The priest came running up and began yelling: 'My noble lords and knights, stop this fight! Come and listen to what I have to say! In the name of Jesus in glory, I want to tell you that God came to speak to me by night. This is absolutely true. My mission is to pass on to you what He said to me. Please listen, my lords,' (he continued), 'you must put behind you the sins you have committed. Go and tell your priests about them and make confession. No more than five days from now [God] will come to your aid in ways I cannot imagine. If you have any doubt about what I am telling you, there is no ordeal under the sky that I would not be willing to undertake [as proof].' The bishop of Le Puy, Adhemar by name, had crosses and relics brought and made him solemnly swear to the truth of what he had said. God wanted to back up his testimony, and made them decide to summon a pilgrim known as Peter.⁴⁵² Listen to what Peter told them.⁴⁵³

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'My lords,' said Peter, 'a moment's attention. Before you took this city I was asleep in my bed down in those fields. A surpassingly beautiful man appeared

⁴⁵² Ms C is alone in identifying him (wrongly) as Peter the Hermit. Other sources call him Peter Bartholomew.

⁴⁵³ The discovery of the Holy Lance was a defining event of the Crusade: while the sources differ in their opinions of its authenticity, its effect on morale was beyond doubt. In his account of the invention of the Holy Lance the writer copies RM quite closely (pp. 162–3); RM's account is more fanciful than that in *GF* (pp. 59–60). There is a fuller and entirely credulous account in RA, whose text centres around the episode (pp. 51–8); a more even-handed one in AA (p. 317); sceptical ones in FC (pp. 99–101); and RC (pp. 118–21). (RC did not like the Occitans anyway: see pp. 86–7.) This is the Lance used by Longinus at the Crucifixion. Given the prominence of the vengeance of Christ theme in the *Antioche*, it is surprising that the text does not make more of the link here: instead it follows RM closely. See S. Runciman, 'The holy lance found at Antioch', *AB*, 68 (1950), pp. 197–209; C. Morris, 'Policy and visions: the case of the Holy Lance at Antioch', in J. Gillingham and J. Holt (eds), *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J. O. Prestwick* (Woodbridge, 1984), pp. 33–45; T. Asbridge, 'The Holy Lance of Antioch: Power, Devotion and Memory on the First Crusade', *Rms*, 33 (2007), pp. 3–36.

before me: his baptismal name was St Andrew. "Listen to me for a moment, my noble friend," he said. "Once you enter Antioch, go the cathedral of St Peter, the holder of the keys of Heaven. There you will find the Lance that wounded God and caused him pain and anguish upon the Holy Cross." With these words he disappeared. When I rose the following morning I was sure it must have been a ghost that had vanished. That very same night he returned to me in the small hours and showed me the place where you will find [the Lance]. If you will come with me, you shall see it now. But be very clear on St Andrew's instructions: each of you must have carried out proper confession. If you offer battle, carry the Lance: you will be the victors, praise be to God! I swear beneath this heaven that there is no ordeal I would not undergo [to prove the truth of this].'

'God be praised, my friend!' replied the bishop [of Le Puy]. Peter led the way with the bishop at his side, followed by large numbers of other nobles. Peter led them to the spot he had been shown almost as if he had been born there. 'My lords,' he said, 'dig right here. If you do not find the Lance, burn me at the stake!' Twelve workmen set to it with large sharp stakes and, as evening fell, they uncovered the reliquary where the Lance lay as you have heard. There was great joy as it was removed from its burial place, and the ordained clerks led a magnificent service.

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Everybody was overjoyed at the discovery of the Lance. They all swore solemnly as one that no setback would make them retreat from battle; they would go all the way to the Holy Sepulchre and take Jerusalem, delivering it from the pagans if such was God's will. The poor rank and file were delighted at this oath. 'This is a good promise,' they said to each other. 'Thanks be to God, ruler of the world.' If the story is to be believed, the following night a thunderbolt hissed down from the west and fell into the middle of the Saracen army, causing great consternation.⁴⁵⁴ It frightened our men greatly; it frightened the Saracens more where the thunderbolt landed, and they never made camp in that spot again. This made the wiser pagans very uneasy and they would have preferred to return back east; however, they were outnumbered by fools and nothing came of it. They came and went as they pleased to the citadel, and fought our men repeatedly in lightning skirmishes.

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Those infidel cowards commanded by Corbaran came and went to the citadel exactly as they pleased. They organised themselves into small strike forces and took on our men; as fast as one group got tired, another appeared ready armed.

⁴⁵⁴ The source remains RM; the 'estoire' referred to may be either Robert or an earlier version of the *Antioche*.

However, our men did not waver in their resolve or lose heart. The barons discussed in council and decided to construct a wall between them and the citadel so that they could defend themselves better against attack. There was an incident one day with a group of [Turks]. Our men chased them with great vigour and forced them back into a tower where they took refuge. Three of our men were caught up in the rush and trapped inside against their will. Two of them were very badly injured at the entrance and had their heads cut off as they tried to make their way out; the third fought his way through to a platform and defended himself there as long as he could, but eventually his head was also cut off. The good Duke Bohemond was deeply angered by the incident: he had been very upset and desperate to go to the man's aid, but his troops were simply too weakened by hunger to do it. He personally made it his business to set fire to an ancient palace that was nearby; the wind blew the kindling into roaring flames and that ensured the cowards did not stay skulking there. Now let me tell you what the Devil did. The fire started at the third hour exactly and the noble city burned until midnight. It is said – and it is true – that 2,000 churches and houses were burnt down before the fire was under control. Our men were in a state of abject terror, and they were particularly upset and demoralised at the fate of the churches.⁴⁵⁵

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Our Franks were desperately angry and miserable. 'Things are going from bad to worse,' they muttered to each other. 'This terrible suffering is the result of our sins. All the poor rank and file are starving to death inside the city, and we cannot hold out for much longer.'

'My lords,' said the bishop, 'listen to my suggestion.'⁴⁵⁶ Let us send an embassy to Corbaran (God crush him!). Our message will be that this kingdom is ours by ancient right but their people took it by force; now we, the rightful holders of the fief, have come. We are ready to prove that they have no claim [in a trial combat] with 20 knights, or just with ten, or one very brave knight in single combat. If he does not agree to these terms we shall come up with something else. You have all heard God's command. We are the ones who have the Lance, and we all know truly that it was with that Lance He suffered torture and death for us men when the

⁴⁵⁵ The fire is described in *GF* (p. 61), and *RM*, which is the writer's source (p. 164). Independently, *RC* says Robert of Flanders set the fire, which caused more devastation than intended (pp. 98–9). The reference to churches is intended both to show the piety of the army and the diabolical nature of the destruction.

⁴⁵⁶ Adhemar's suggestion of combat by champions is not found elsewhere; the idea of a combat of champions is alluded to in passing by *RM*, though not connected with Adhemar (p. 165). *FC* (p. 103), *RC* (pp. 102–3), and *AA* (pp. 318–19) all include a suggestion of trial by combat in Peter's offer of terms.

villainous Jews put Him cruelly to death. All of us are His sons: we shall avenge Him.'

'Shame on anyone who does not take up the challenge!' replied the nobles.

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The noble warriors agreed with this proposal. 'Whom can we send?' they asked each other. However, not a single one of them was brave enough to rise [and volunteer]. The only exception was Peter the Hermit, who was the first to speak. 'My lords,' he said to the princes, 'if you agree, I shall go, in honour of God who is Judge of all. If I die in the attempt, I shall beg God to give me my reward on the Day of Judgement.' Amongst our men there was a knight called Herluin, a very valiant man. 'My lords,' he said to the princes, 'let me tell you my request. I shall go with him, because I am determined to help in your hour of need.'⁴⁵⁷

'My lord,' the barons replied, 'we are heartily grateful. If we can use you to carry out our mission and get the Turks to agree that we are the rightful holders of the land, we shall be grateful to you as long as we live. Make sure you take one of our interpreters with you who can put across our arguments and report the responses.'⁴⁵⁸ Go as quickly as you can; do not hang back.' The ambassadors turned immediately to leave and the bishop of Le Puy began to pronounce blessing on them. All three messengers left the city and went to Corbaran to challenge him for the kingdom.

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The three messengers turned and left the city. They were well shod, well dressed and well turned out. Peter was riding a donkey with luxurious harness; the other two were on mules that ambled obediently at their command. They did not draw rein until they had reached Corbaran's tent. Corbaran was sitting in the centre of the tent on a folding stool made of gold with enamelled inlay, dressed like a king and with a large number of his barons in his entourage: all this created the impression of a baron confident in his own power. Our messengers stopped in front of him, but neither greeted him nor bowed. This infuriated the Turks in the tent and, had they not been ambassadors, that would have been the end of them

⁴⁵⁷ The embassy undoubtedly took place, led by Peter the Hermit, with Herluin as his interpreter (*GF*, pp. 61, 66–7; *RM*, p. 165; *AA*, pp. 317–19; *RC*, pp. 102–3; *FC*, p. 103). The *Antioche* embellishes the tale lavishly. Whether there was any real expectation of negotiation is doubtful; the mission may have been a cover for espionage.

⁴⁵⁸ The interpreter is found only in *RM*, who more than once shows a sharp grasp of administrative realities; *GF* says Herluin was bilingual (p. 67). The *Canso* puts Herluin into the role of Corbaran's informant played in the *Antioche* by Amedelis (vv. 1–184).

in short order. Lord Peter the Hermit was the first to speak: ‘Corbaran, listen to the message our Franks have instructed us to give you. They are incredibly upset – indeed, they regard it as an insult – that you could have dared take up arms against them. The gods you have served and honoured so faithfully have led you badly astray with their boasts: for all of you will be killed and held up to shame. Our barons’ message to you (for which they have shown me abundant evidence) is that this kingdom is theirs and has been since ancient times. It was your people who cruelly wrested it away. Now [their descendants] have come to claim their inheritance. They are ready to fight out the issue head to head on the battlefield, with twenty men or ten out in the middle of the field, or with one very brave man. The one who loses will go back to his kingdom safe, sound and free, all claims cancelled.’ Corbaran’s reaction on hearing this was to roar with laughter.

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When he heard this Corbaran could not stop himself from bursting out laughing. ‘Just listen to this bizarre farrago of nonsense!’ he said to the Turks. ‘These people really are showing immense common sense and cunning – did you hear the totally mad bargain they are offering! They are ready to fight it out in combat to prove that this kingdom is theirs by long-standing right, whether with twenty men or ten in the middle of this field, or one on one if our people agree. They hope to save all their own lives by sacrificing one of their own. Well, by the faith I have held for so long, they are not going to get away with it. Their chance of escape is worth about as much as a throw of the dice. All of them are going to die or find themselves in my power. Alternatively, if they agree to apostasise from their hated faith, I shall shower riches on the most noble of the lords and ensure the poor rank and file are given their fill to eat. Anyone on foot will be given a Syrian mule. I shall accompany them personally to Jerusalem; they will enjoy my close friendship and be my near associates; and I shall give them lordship over this entire kingdom.’ When the courageous Herluin heard this, he replied to Corbaran: ‘A curse on anyone who agrees!’

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Herluin was so upset that he nearly burst with rage. ‘You are talking total rubbish,’ he said to Corbaran. ‘You villain! You grasping plunderer! You are evil to the core. You have absolutely no idea of what our people really think. If you had any idea how unthinkable it is to renounce Jesus, Ruler of the world – Him and His beloved mother and all His works – you could never have uttered such venomous words. I am sure that before the week is out, you will see so many young and valiant knights, so many helmets and hauberts and expensive weapons, that you will indeed have a hard heart if fear does not seize you. You will not want to face

them in battle for all the gold in Benevento.⁴⁵⁹ Your fate will be torment and death.' When Corbaran heard him reply so harshly, he swore by the gods he adored that, if they weren't envoys, he would be hanging them out to swing in the wind. Herluin did not wait around when he heard this. They left the tent with all possible speed.

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As Corbaran watched them leaving his tent, he said to his entourage: 'I am amazed I can contain myself. Did you hear what those losers said? They are vicious and greedy and nothing but trouble. Can you guess what orders I intend to ask you to carry out? When you see the Franks preparing for battle, not a single one is to be left to return to his home. I can tell you for a fact that if any manage to escape, they will exact a terrible revenge with their shining bright steel swords; they would rather die to a man than find themselves in our dungeons.' This was a very stupid move by Corbaran: the more he praised and talked up our men, the more he left his own men shaking with fear and dismay.⁴⁶⁰ Now I am going to leave the messengers for a moment; you will hear me return to them in short order. That night, when Corbaran had risen from supper, a rich emir from beyond the Red Sea and the redoubtable Red Lion began to play chess and draughts.⁴⁶¹ The prize was the heads of the various barons that they expected to chop off. Godfrey's head was up for grabs; they did not overlook Tancred or Bohemond or Robert, the overlord of Flanders; and they had some bright ideas about what they might do to Robert of Normandy's head. But now may God, who saves us all, come to their aid! There is all the difference in the world between thinking and actually doing. The soldiers from beyond the sea were in Antioch. They raised the question through Robert the Frisian as to who would deliver battle if that was to be the way forward. May God, the Salvation of all, protect them!⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁹ As often in the *Antioche*, picked to fit the rhyme.

⁴⁶⁰ The observation is from RM (p. 166).

⁴⁶¹ The game of chess is not in RM; it is, however, in RA, p. 62; FC, p. 105; RC, p. 106; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors (2 vols, Oxford, 1998–99), vol. 1, p. 637. See P. Jonin, 'La partie d'échecs dans l'épopée médiévale', *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier* (2 vols, Geneva, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 483–97.

⁴⁶² The passage that follows, concerning rivalry between Robert of Normandy and Godfrey of Bouillon, is original, and was probably inserted as an occasion to describe Godfrey's legendary ancestry. From this point the *Antioche* parts company with RM other than for isolated episodes.

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Before the messengers could get back home, the Frankish leaders inside the walls of Antioch started drawing up the order of battle led by Robert the Frisian, in groups of 100 or 60 or 20, and so many others that nobody had ever seen the like before. They would rather have a battle than refined gold or Byzantine *mangons*.⁴⁶⁴ They chose Godfrey of Bouillon for the single combat, because of his valour and spotless reputation and his descent from Charlemagne.⁴⁶⁵ When the duke of Normandy heard of this choice, his nose was put thoroughly out of joint. He went off to his tent and had stools set up for him and his entourage. 'What do you plan to do, my lord?' said Fulcher of Alençon. 'By my faith, I am going back home. After all, wasn't Richard son of Doon [de Mayence] my ancestor?'⁴⁶⁶ He was never unhorsed by any knight. Shouldn't I be the chosen candidate faced with this sort of challenge? As they have chosen someone else, they obviously think I am just some callow youth. Since the duke didn't have a single relative worth mentioning, he should have been left out of this choice!

'My lord, stop there before you say something you may regret. By God who created the world, he is of very noble lineage. You have heard full well who he is and his soubriquet. His ancestor was brought by a swan to the sandy riverbanks at Nijmegen.⁴⁶⁷ He came all alone in a boat with no companions across the gravel of the river bed to the main keep. He was well shod, dressed in a richly striped swansdown cloak, and his head gleamed like a peacock's feather; God had never made a more handsome man; he had a large strong physique that made him look very noble. The emperor induced him to remain in the country by giving him a wife as a reward, a relative of his through his cousin Begon; good fertile land; and the fief of Bouillon. In return the knight led his armies and carried his banner, serving him faithfully and killing nobody – until the time came for the swan to return. It took the knight away in a ship across the salt sea, with no sail and no sailor.⁴⁶⁸ No gift the king could offer was enough to make him stay. The household was plunged into grief. Nothing more was ever heard of him. A daughter was left behind in the castle of Bouillon; and Duke Godfrey is descended from her. We have chosen him because he has a noble heart and is expert with shield and

⁴⁶³ Ms B adds material on Godfrey and Tancred buying a horse for Robert of Flanders.

⁴⁶⁴ A coin worth two bezants.

⁴⁶⁵ This underlines Godfrey's credentials as an epic hero.

⁴⁶⁶ Moisan identifies Richard as a mistake for Renaut de Montauban, grandson of Doon de Mayence (vol. 2, p. 818).

⁴⁶⁷ A reference to the legends about Godfrey's ancestors in the *Chevalier au Cygne* that form the first part of the Cycle. It is not clear whether they were already linked to the *Antioche* or whether this reference to legendary material was inserted later.

⁴⁶⁸ Literally a 'dromond': originally a Byzantine oared galley, but by the twelfth century Latin sources used the word for large ships both oared and sailed (T-L, vol. 2, pp. 2085–6).

quarterstaff; once he is armed and up on his Gascon warhorse, anyone choosing to take him on would be a fool. He is a champion both on foot and on horseback.'

'By my head,' replied the count, 'You certainly know how to spin a tale. No priest in the whole army has given a better sermon than that.'

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When the duke of Bouillon heard rumours that Duke Robert of Normandy intended to take his departure, he made his way to Robert's tent along with a noble entourage. He was the first to get down from his excellent Syrian mule. As soon as he saw the count he addressed him very courteously as follows: 'Greetings, Robert! You are a noble count, a good man and brave with it. Let me make no bones about it: you are a better man than I. Please don't be angry or jealous because of the combat. I am not joking when I say I would be delighted to cede my task to you. I cannot imagine any knight filling it better. You are the best knight between here and the mountains of Bulgaria. I would cede my place to you with pleasure but that Christendom has chosen to put it on my shoulders.' When the count realised that the duke was abasing himself for his sake, he came forward and thanked him graciously. 'My lord, in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, this is to be your task. I shall be alongside you fighting shoulder to shoulder to help defeat those wretched Saracen bastards.' Now here comes Peter the Hermit riding up on his Hungarian donkey, bursting to tell them how he got on.

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'Listen to me, my lords!' said the hermit. 'As far as Corbaran is concerned, you in here are nearly dead on your feet with hunger. He said in front of his entourage like a madman that you would rue the day you gave battle: none of his men would be wounded or injured, and he expects to take all of you prisoner before the day is out. Once you are all in his power, most will be burnt and torn limb from limb; the noblest will be led away in chains.'

'We must fight at all costs, my lords!' said Tancred. 'Gentlemen,' said Bohemond, 'in God's name hold on a moment. I want first to know about the poor rank and file who are dying because they are suffering so much: do they want to give battle? What is their opinion?'⁴⁶⁹ This suggestion was agreed and accepted. As night fell they went to their lodgings. The following day at dawn Bohemond mounted a warhorse and went to seek out the exhausted remnants of his army all around. What he saw were poor townsmen and peasants on their last legs. [But] all cried, 'My lord, you must give battle! Better to be killed on the battlefields out there than to die here of hunger, as you can see.'

⁴⁶⁹ This episode, uncannily foreshadowing Shakespeare's *Henry V*, is not in RM.

‘My lords,’ said Bohemond, ‘you will find yourself giving battle this Friday in the name of the Lord who was tortured on the Cross.’

‘God be praised!’ they responded as one. With that [Bohemond] went back to the nobles who were gathered in the main square. ‘What can you report?’ they shouted to him. ‘A moment’s attention, gentlemen,’ said Bohemond. ‘I have canvassed our rank and file and sought their views, and I find them very keen to give battle. I have promised it to them for this Friday. So each one of you needs to be ready equipped – the gold of twenty cities would not be enough to postpone it.’ They replied as one: ‘Yes! Yes! By God, that dawn cannot come soon enough.’

‘My lords, listen to me for a moment,’ said the bishop [of Le Puy]. ‘For the love of God I implore you to spend these three days fasting and going to church in your shirts and barefoot. Anyone who has enough to live on should give to the poor so that God in glory takes pity on you and comes to help and support you on that day.’

‘Your Reverence,’ they answered, ‘we shall do as you command.’ They spent the next three days in a highly edifying fashion. Both poor and rich had enough to eat. They rolled their hauberks in sand barrels, polished their headgear, took up their shields, burnished their swords and put on their helmets. Each one was determined to do his utmost to defend himself, ready equipped for the fight. A spy slipped out and made his way to the [Saracen] army.⁴⁷⁰ He reported that our troops were all starving, and so short of food that they were eating their palfreys. This did wonders for morale in the pagan army. Corbaran had him seized and flung into prison: if his report turned out to be untrue, he would have his head cut off, and the gold of ten cities would not be enough to cure that. Corbaran prepared himself carefully and thought long and hard. He called Amedelis and said to him: ‘Come here a moment. I want you to go among the Franks inside Antioch and see how they are getting on. Come back tomorrow morning.’

‘I stand ready to do your bidding,’ replied Amedelis. He left the silken tent and set off for Antioch; going in through the gate he spent the night lying next to an old moat and assessing the state of readiness of the Frankish leaders: their hauberks and helmets and shields with central bosses, their flowing-maned palfreys and fresh warhorses, the equipment of the nobles and the leading princes. He saw how richly they were dressed and equipped. He heard them planning the encounters and organising the order of battle for the proud ranks of armed knights, arranging which would go behind, which at the sides and which on the flanks. ‘There is no doubt about it,’ he said to himself, ‘there has never been such a race since the birth of your God.’ He made his way back to the [Turkish] army as soon as possible and reported back in the following terms.

⁴⁷⁰ This spy is the one in RM (p. 168), who will later be decapitated as the text suggests. The mission of Amedelis, which is not in RM, rather duplicates this. The incongruity was felt by some of the scribes of the *Antioche* since the reference to the first spy is found only here, in ms B, and in part in ms C.

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My lords, I am going to turn my attention from this messenger: I shall come back to him in a moment.⁴⁷¹ Inside Antioch there were two knights who were companions and very close friends. One of them came from Creel: he was the son of the proud Antelme and his name was Eurvin: his ancestor was Rainier, who never deceived his lord. The other was Pierre Postel, who was born near Montdidier. Both were vassals responsible for many deeds of bravery.⁴⁷² On the Thursday morning Eurvin of Creel went to church to pray to God. While Pierre was getting up and putting his shoes on, his squires turned up in front of him in floods of tears. 'Sir,' they said, 'we have nothing to eat. Yesterday was the seventh day in a row where we had no bread; and now things have got worse because we don't have even a single penny's worth of meat.'

'Don't fret yourself, my handsome young man,' said Pierre. 'Take Eurvin's donkey, skin it, then boil and roast some of its meat.'

'We wouldn't dare, sir,' said his squires. 'He would beat and thump and hurt us.'

'Didn't you hear my orders? Do it, you cowardly sons of whores!' The squires ran to find large steel knives; imagine the scene as they slaughtered and sliced up the donkey, then put chunks in the cauldron and on a large gridiron. When Eurvin came back and saw the cooking operations, he crossed himself and gave thanks to God. 'Wherever did you find the meat I see cooking on that fire?'

'My lord, it's the donkey you used to have as a pack animal.' Eurvin thought this was a joke. He ran off to check; finding that the donkey was no longer in the stable, he flew into a rage. Seeking out Pierre, he began to shout at the top of his voice. Just imagine him bellowing and raging, arguing furiously and showering vituperation on him. 'On my head, Lord Peter, there was no way you should have given such an order! That donkey carried my hauberk and my green-sheened helmet. I shall miss him all the time on campaign. You are a true descendant of Garnier, who made a habit of teaching suckers to play at tables and only liked people he could cheat.'⁴⁷³ Pierre heard him out then tried to calm him down. He addressed him in soothing tones, making every effort to win him round. 'Eurvin, my noble friend, by the body of St Leger this should really not have come as a surprise. We needed it desperately. The long famine has weakened us and a starving man cannot defend himself. Before I let us get into an even worse state I

⁴⁷¹ Formula designed to evoke the orality of the epic. This is an odd episode with overtones of the *fabliau*, found in no other source. It provides some light relief before the intensity of the final battle; perhaps too it shows the unity against adversity in the army. Duparc-Quioic suggests that it may originally have accompanied one of the descriptions of famine, although in that case it is not obvious why it should have been moved (*Edition*, p. 377).

⁴⁷² The text uses the term 'vavasor', a minor vassal.

⁴⁷³ The reference is unclear.

intend to do the same with my best warhorse. The battle will be tomorrow; it will not be put off. We shall go out to fight to serve Our Lord whom the wicked Jews crucified: in return it is our duty to put our lives on the line for him. Before we see the sun set in the evening, we won't be needing any donkey to carry our clothes: either we shall have had our heads chopped off out on that field, or we shall be so wealthy with silver and pure gold that we shall not have to go begging from our neighbours. So let us pray to God, Judge of all, to protect us from death and suffering.' When Eurvin heard Pierre speak so humbly, he flung his arms round his neck and began to shower kisses on him. 'My noble companion, how can I disagree with what you have said? Let it be God's pleasure to guide us.' Picture them restored to harmony, the two of them sitting down together to eat their fill together with their sergeants. Now let me tell you about the pagan who went to spy on them and what Corbaran said to him.

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Corbaran rose to his feet and called Amedelis. 'Tell me your honest opinion: are these dogs half-dead with hunger going to surrender to me if I attack them?'

'By my faith, my lord,' replied the Arab, 'I have never seen such handsome, brave and resolute men so keen to mount their horses and fight. You can be totally sure of a hard fight on the battlefield before evening comes at the end of the day: I have seen them drawn up in ranks and spoiling for a fight.'

'My friend,' said Corbaran, 'you are scared stiff. When I brought you here with me from the kingdom of Persia, I thought you were an excellent and outstanding knight. Don't say anything more on the topic in the name of the faith you follow.'

'By my faith, my lord,' said Amedelis, 'we shall know before the end of the day how things really stand.'

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It was a Friday.⁴⁷⁴ Dawn broke and the sun rose over the whole region. Doors were unlocked in the city of Antioch. Brave and noble men were getting up everywhere in the city, well-respected Franks and Lotharingians. The bishop of Le Puy sang Mass: they listened intently with full hearts. Had you been there you would have seen a stream of people going to confession, telling their sins to Our Lord and weeping for the love and pity of it. They were sure they would not live to see the evening. When they had been signed with the cross, they cried 'Up!' and went immediately to arm themselves at their quarters. You can imagine how many

⁴⁷⁴ In fact the 28 June was a Monday. But a Friday sits better with the theme of the vengeance of Christ, alluding to the day of the Crucifixion. The Occitan *Canso* is similarly emphatic (v. 1).

hauberks were put on, how many helmets laced up and swords buckled to sides, and the number of swift warhorses with chestnut hindquarters. They assembled in the middle of Antioch and drew up their whole battle plan in order. Now you are going to hear a brilliant song about how the squadrons marched out into the field. I am not, my gentle audience, recounting it because I want as much as one penny from you if this song is not to your liking. It is rather because bravery of this kind deserves to be remembered: we shall not see the like of such chivalry again.⁴⁷⁵

306

The bishop of Le Puy was brave and eloquent, determined to serve God to the best of his ability. Ever since the army had entered foreign territories he had never put on armour no matter how grave the situation; now battle was imminent he did not refuse to do so.⁴⁷⁶ When he had completed Mass, he came back from the church and made his way as fast as possible to his quarters. He took off the flowing robes he was wearing and was supplied with superb battle equipment. He put on a hauberk with gilded panels and laced on a gold bejewelled helmet; some golden spurs were fastened to his feet, then he buckled a sword at his left side. His swift warhorse was led up to him, worth more than a thousand pounds in penny coins. He put his foot in the left stirrup and swung into the saddle, his shield round his neck and his stole next to it. Two dragons were riveted to his firm spear haft.⁴⁷⁷ He spurred the horse on both sides and it leapt a good 30 feet forwards. He rode up to the Franks and greeted them. The good duke of Bouillon rode to meet him and shouted loudly: 'Sir knight, where are you from? I do not recognise you with those dragons. I have never seen you before in the army, which is why I am confused.'

'My lord, I am the bishop who has been devoted to your cause. I have never yet given you poor advice. Today as you well know you will fight a battle. Remember God who was hanged on the Cross, something the Jews did in their cruelty. Outside the city the arrogant Corbaran and his kin are waiting for us with innumerable others. Today wealth and great possessions are within your grasp provided you do not let them slip through your fingers as a result of your great sins. Make sure you concentrate on the fight with every ounce of your being. Today you will see winged angels in the press of battle, sent to you by God in His great majesty.'⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁵ The marching out of the squadrons is a set piece. It is the only battle for which the sources describe the disposition of forces, but in less detail than here: see note to *laisse* 315. The text marks out the beginning of this episode very clearly. The 'cancon de bien enluiminee' could refer either to the *Antioche* itself or to an earlier poetic source.

⁴⁷⁶ Adhemar is cast in the same role as the warrior bishop Turpin of the *Roland*.

⁴⁷⁷ Since dragons elsewhere symbolize evil, it is not clear why Adhemar should choose to carry them.

⁴⁷⁸ *Laisse* 358 has the appearance of the warrior saints, and *laisse* 371 white forces, both from RM (p. 171); neither refers to angels.

Anyone who dies for Him is truly fortunate: he will sit together with the martyrs.’ When our men heard these words, they were deeply touched. All raised their arms to the heavens and thanked God over and over in gratitude. ‘A quick word, my lord,’ said the duke. ‘I am happier to have you bearing arms than if a thousand knights, armed and ready, were to spring up in these fields outside.’⁴⁷⁹

307

When the bishop of Le Puy (whose responsibility was to preach sermons) saw the nobles assembled round him, he addressed each one in turn courteously by name.⁴⁸⁰ ‘Come forward, Lord Robert the Frisian. You are the one to carry the Lance we have discovered, in the name of the Lord whom it is our duty to serve; He suffered death for us at the hands of the villainous Jews, was laid in the Sepulchre and guarded by thieves, all to release us from the misery of captivity.’⁴⁸¹ Robert replied: ‘My Lord, you are wasting your time in such talk. I wouldn’t carry it for the whole fief of Soissons. I am much more interested in fighting these gluttonous Saracens whom I can see swarming over the hills and valleys. I shall have the Flemish with me as companions, more than 10,000 of them on Gascon warhorses. I shall strike so assiduously with my gold-hilted sword that my ermine robe will be soaked with blood and my warhorse will have blood up to his fetlocks. Even the wicked Corbaran and the Red Lion themselves will not be able to save themselves from death at the hands of our men.’

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When the bishop heard the count swear along these lines that he had no inclination or desire to carry the Lance, he turned to Robert of Normandy. ‘My lord,’ he said to him, ‘I wish to command you to carry the Lance to which you have heard me refer, in the name of the Lord whom it is our duty to worship. He allowed himself to be hanged from the Holy Cross for our sake and was placed in the Sepulchre where He was put under guard; wanting to stay there no longer, He rose on the third day and went down to unbar the gates of Hell to free His loved ones from prison.’

⁴⁷⁹ A possible (rare) classical reference to Cadmus of Thebes.

⁴⁸⁰ This series of *laisses*, where the bishop tries to persuade the leaders in turn to carry the Lance into battle, is original to the *Antioche* and presumably intended to entertain the audience. Each *laisse* follows a similar structure of request, refusal and reference to Corbaran and Red Lion. The emphasis on the Lance evokes the vengeance theme, with explicit references to the Crucifixion in each *laisse*. See S.B. Edgington, ‘Holy Land, Holy Lance: religious ideas in the *Chanson d’Antioche*’, *SCH*, 36 (2000), pp. 142–53.

⁴⁸¹ The reference is to the Harrowing of Hell in the *Gospel of Nicodemus* (chapter 5). However, it also evokes the memory of the ‘chétifs’ imprisoned in Oliferne.

Robert replied: 'My lord, no more of this. I would not carry it for all the gold in St-Omer. I am far keener to rain blows on those [Saracen] bastards crawling all over the valleys and the surrounding land – God crush them! I intend to have my own people with me. I shall deliver so many blows with my sword of shining steel that the whole thing will be stained and splashed with [Saracen] blood. Their leader Corbaran himself and Red Lion will have nothing to boast about.'

309

When the bishop heard that Robert of Normandy would not carry the Lance, no matter how nicely he was asked, he called the good and noble-faced duke of Bouillon to come up in front of him and asked him courteously: 'My lord, will you carry the Lance in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Our Lord, Ruler of all, whom the Jews villainously killed? He was laid in the Sepulchre and kept under close surveillance; on the third day He rose again in His almighty power to free His loved ones from the miserable existence they were leading.'

'My lord,' replied the duke, 'I would not carry it even if you were to give me all the gold in Russia. I am more interested in fighting the hated [Saracens] whom I see covering the mountains and surrounding land. I shall have the Lotharingians and Frisians with me. I shall strike so many blows with my glittering sword that my entire fists will be blackened with [the Saracens'] blood. Neither the villainous Corbaran, their leader, nor Red Lion – cursed be his line! – will find it a laughing matter if I have anything to do with it. They will not be able to go boasting in the kingdom of Persia that they have cost us the value of as much as one throw of the dice.'

310

The bishop of Le Puy was abundantly clear that the duke of Bouillon had no inclination or desire to carry the Lance that he held, even as a gift. He quickly proceeded to summon Tancred in short order and asked him courteously to carry the Lance in the name of the Lord to whom the world belongs: He suffered appalling torment for all of us and suffered a cruel death at the hands of the villainous Jews; He rose again on the third day with no hesitation to release His friends from the foulness of Hell. Tancred replied, 'My Lord, you are wasting your time by asking me. I would not carry it for all the gold in Benevento. I am much more interested in fighting those people out there who attack us in lightning skirmishes. I shall have with me ample forces of young men, more than 10,000 by my count. I shall strike so many blows with my silver-hilted sword that I shall leave it stained and splashed and dripping with their blood. Even that villain Corbaran, who is lying in wait for us outside, and Red Lion will not be brave enough to cope with the pain [of defeat] if they take me on.'

311

The bishop heard out Tancred's refusal: he would not carry the Lance for the sake of any man alive. He summoned the marquis Bohemond. 'Come forward, my noble and outstanding lord. You are the one to carry the Lance of Jesus, Lord of Paradise. He was killed for us sinners on the Cross; He was taken down and laid in the Sepulchre; three days later He rose and went down to Hell to free His friends.'

'My lord,' said Bohemond, 'do not bother saying any more. I would not carry it for the fief of Paris. I am more interested in fighting these Arabs whom I see covering the mountains and scrubland. I shall have alongside me the people of my own country, Lombards and Tuscans and those from Montcenis. I shall strike so hard with my glittering sword that it will be darkened with blood right up to my hands. The villainous Corbaran himself will not be powerful enough and nor will Red Lion (may God be his downfall!) to avoid defeat if I come face to face with them in battle. They will not be able to go boasting in the kingdom of Persia that they have cost us the value of as much as one partridge.'

312

When the bishop heard Bohemond make it very clear that he had no intention of looking after the Lance, no matter what the circumstances, he appealed to Hugh of Vermandois, a noble soldier. 'Come forward, my lord. In the name of God I would like to implore you to carry the Lance in the great pitched battle in the name of that Lord who can pass judgement on all. He allowed Himself to be injured and tortured for us, crowned with thorns, then crucified. He was laid in the Sepulchre where He was guarded. On the third day He rose again and went down immediately to break open the great gates of Hell in order to release His friends from torment.'

'My lord,' replied Count Hugh, 'this is a waste of time. I wouldn't carry it for all the gold in Montpellier. I am more interested in fighting with my shining steel sword against these people I see swarming over the fields outside (God make them suffer!) – indeed, rather than anything to eat or drink. I shall have with me a large force of valiant knights, more than 10,000 riding into battle. I shall strike the first blow to the honour of God. The villainous Corbaran himself will not be able to protect himself, nor will the Red Lion of whom I have heard such praise. If I can just manage to strike him with my sword, I shall leave it splashed and stained with their blood. The cowardly wretches will not be able to boast that they have cost us the value of as much as a penny.' Then he said to the bishop: 'Why don't you stop trying to pester us into doing this? You shall be the one to carry the Lance, armed and on your own warhorse. You will not find anyone else with the temerity to take charge of it.'⁴⁸²

⁴⁸² The importance of the Lance is underlined by the fact that Adhemar carries it. In real life he was sceptical about its authenticity: Asbridge, *First Crusade*, p. 223.

313

'My lord,' said Count Hugh, 'you are on a hiding to nothing asking any of us to carry the Lance. You should admit that it is not for us to do so. It is your role as a priest and ordained bishop – and there is in my opinion no better one between here and Balaguer. We are all knights experienced in tactics. It is for us to start off the whole battle and bring it to an end. Your job is to ride out in front of us on your armoured warhorse, carrying the Lance by which God was hurt and wounded and tortured on the Holy Cross. We shall carve out a passage for you with our sharp swords: anyone who gets in our way will be struck down mercilessly. Not even the villainous Corbaran, who led them here, or Red Lion will be brave enough to stand up to us in their great arrogance, and if they do they will be battered by our blows.'

314

'My lords, here is my verdict,' said the bishop. 'I shall carry the Lance since it has been handed into my care. But if we all go out into those fields, up there is a lofty citadel guarded by a highly renowned emir – Garsion of Antioch – with his infidel forces. They would not hesitate to devastate and pillage the city, killing and maiming those of us who are sick. We would never recover from such a loss. So if you agree it would make sense to me that one of us should stay behind with a considerable armed force.'

'That is absolutely true,' replied the nobles. The choice fell on Raymond of St-Gilles. They all begged him in the name of his well-known merit to stay behind in the city and guard the entrance [to the citadel?]. When the count heard this, the colour drained from his face. He was extremely upset and hung his head. However, the bishop of Le Puy pointed out to him that this was the sensible course. If he remained in the city his soul would be saved, and he could not spend his day in a better place. When the bishop had explained this the count acquiesced, willingly or not.⁴⁸³ Then he split his company into two halves. One half was given to the bishop to command: the other was to stay with him, ready equipped and determined to defend the city.

⁴⁸³ This is a very different story from that told in the sources. RA claims the count was ill (p. 61); in the *GF* he is accused of feigning illness (p. 68). AA says he was 'suffering slightly from illness' (pp. 322–3).

315⁴⁸⁴

A huge force was assembled in the middle of Antioch. The bishop of Le Puy gave them some gentle encouragement. 'My noble lords and knights, do not lose heart. Anyone who loses his life here will have his soul saved. The first one to go out onto the field will, if he suffers martyrdom or death from a weapon, find his garlanded soul rising to Almighty God.' All were silent. Nobody replied or shouted out. None of them was so brave as not to fear for his life – except for Hugh of Vermandois, who lost no time in saying: 'I am the brother of the king who rules France. If it be God's will, that land will have no reason to be ashamed of me. Anyone who fears death more than shame has no right of lordship. I shall be the first to ride out in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I shall strike the Saracens down with my glittering sword.' (He had, incidentally, three companions from his immediate household; they were proud and stupid men who deserted because they were afraid to die. I know their names perfectly well, but I am not going to tell you: may God pardon them for such wickedness!)⁴⁸⁵ The bishop of Le Puy (whose life was distinguished for its holiness) opened the gate for them then pronounced a blessing. He signed them with the Cross in the name of Our Lord, ruler of all, and sprinkled them abundantly with holy water. Count Hugh rode out with his knights. Had you been there you would have seen countless stitched flags, countless helmets and countless hauberks glinting golden, countless heavy spear hafts and countless splendid shields and countless warhorses from Gascony and Brie. They prepared their battle order in the fields the other side of the bridge, drawing up their entire squadron in orderly ranks. When Corbaran saw this, he shouted to his spy: 'Tell me Amedelis, does this make sense or not? Are they off

⁴⁸⁴ This *laisse* marks the start of a run of *laisses* describing the marching out of the forces from Antioch, a set piece marked in ms A by a miniature before it. The *laisses* are fictional and formulaic: the battalion is described; Corbaran quizzes Amedelis about it; Amedelis replies with foreboding (based on one night's espionage, apparently – *laisse* 302); Red Lion quails. It might be thought to be the writer's invention, but there is a much briefer exchange between Kerbogha and 'Mirdalin', to the same effect, in RA, p. 62. The *GF* and dependants describe seven columns, the main leaders plus an ancillary column under Rainald of Toul: *GF*, p. 69; GN, p. 109; BB, p. 75; RM, p. 167; see also AA, pp. 322–3; RC, pp. 105–6; FC, pp. 104–5. The Occitan *Canso* has the first seven columns but not the fantasy battalions of Tafurs and women (vv. 1–184). See S. B. Edgington, 'Romance and Reality in the Sources for the Sieges of Antioch 1097–1098', in C. Dendrinos et al. (eds) *Porphyrogenita: Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 33–46.

⁴⁸⁵ It is unclear to whom this refers. RM refers to Everard of Le Puiset, Pagan of Beauvais, Drogo [of Nesle], Clarenbald of Vendeuil and Thomas of Marle as companions of Hugh but there is no suggestion they deserted (pp. 172–3). Those who had previously deserted Antioch to escape Corbaran are named by *GF* as William and Aubrey of Grandmesnil, Guy Trousseau and Lambert the Poor but there is no specific connection with Hugh (p. 56).

hunting or are they going to make an attack? If you have any idea who they are, tell me.'

'My lord, they are Franks from that happy land. The man leading the squadron is the brother of the king. His name is Hugh of Vermandois. He places his trust in God's name. In the thick of battle he fights so ferociously that he goes berserk, and I am afraid of the blows he rains down.'

'My friend,' said Corbaran, 'that is a cowardly thing to say. No matter what anyone says I shall not be asking your opinion again.' Red Lion chimed in: 'I don't know whether it's a crime to say so, but the man I see there is so impressive that I wouldn't take him on in a fight for all the gold in Russia.' Corbaran replied, 'Some boast.'

316

Count Robert of Flanders was the next to come out.⁴⁸⁶ He had a very large company of tried-and-tested vassals armed with hauberks, helmets and shields with bucklers; they had strong tough spears with pennants hanging from them. They rode out with their blood up on warhorses with flowing manes. The count stopped, once across the bridge over the Orontes, and addressed his companions: 'Be strong, in God's name! Our swords will cut a swathe through these cowardly pagans and we shall chop off their heads with our swords of tempered steel. If only it was God's pleasure now in His heavenly power to have every single race from the East here now – we could defeat and kill the whole lot of them.' Corbaran watched them narrowly. Calling Amedelis, he asked: 'Have you come across these men?'

'My lord, that is Robert. He is a shrewd and brave man. He is the count of all Flanders and holds it in his charge.' Corbaran replied: 'You have a shrewd eye on most things. Do you think he has come out here to go hunting?'

'My lord,' replied the Arab, 'you are in a foul temper. I have no intention of having my head bitten off no matter what I say; and I do not want to be on the receiving end of any more tongue-lashings.' Red Lion overheard this and commented: 'This man looks like the ultimate in nobility. I wouldn't wait for him [to attack me] for all the gold of Cahus.'

317

The count of Normandy was proud and resolute. In his company were noble knights who totalled a good ten thousand once assembled. They were armed with hauberks, helmets and quartered shields; they had strong stout spears with pennants hanging in folds. Their shields glittered with silver and refined gold, and

⁴⁸⁶ For once correctly titled. RM here calls him 'Dux Flandrensis' (p. 167).

the iron and steel of their hauberks and helmets shone. They rode out on their swift warhorses, their blood up. The noble soldiers stopped in the field the other side of the bridge next to two laurel trees, the count at their head. He addressed them courteously and with a good will. 'My lords, let your hearts be determined and resolute and let each of you fight this day as a soldier of God. Our swords will cut a swathe through these cowards who come from the Devil.' Corbaran watched, then said arrogantly: 'I am worried these people are going to attack our scouts.' When his interpreter Amedelis heard this, he did not mislead in his response:⁴⁸⁷ 'By God, Lord Corbaran, you will have nothing but trouble if you think men of that quality are mere rabble.'

'This is all a waste of time,' said Red Lion. 'I wouldn't wait for him [to attack me] for all the gold in Pavia.'

318

The next to come out was Godfrey of Bouillon. Along with him came many noble knights armoured with hauberks and helmets of various designs. They carried strong unbending spears with many rich flags. They came out of the gate walking and trotting. He and his companions stopped on the other side of the bridge, and he appealed to them personally in courteous and reasoned terms: 'My lords, you can see the royal standard further down the valley. That is where I think Corbaran and Red Lion are, surrounded by Turks from beyond Capharnaum. Do not lose heart no matter what their numbers; turn your minds to a hail of hard blows.'

'My lord, we shall do as you command,' they replied. 'All of us would rather die than do anything shameful.' When he heard what was going on, Corbaran looked across at them. Calling Amedelis, he said: 'What is the name of that man who is leading this squadron and has a crimson dragon?'

'By my faith, my lord! We can tell you straight away. His name is Godfrey and that is how he is known. No better knight ever bore spurs. He lusts after battle more than refined gold or *mangons* or pursuing girls or flying a merlin falcon. He was the one among us who carried out the famous slaughter when he sliced an emir in half through liver and lungs so that one half was left lying on the sand and the other half stayed on his Aragonese warhorse.'⁴⁸⁸ The Persians and Slavs were plunged into despair at the sight.' Corbaran looked at the floor when he heard this and said nothing for a long time. At this you might have heard the villainous Red Lion voicing objections. Smiling, he said: 'And are we just going to stay here and wait for these men? Count me out, in the name of my God known as Mohammed.'

⁴⁸⁷ Amedelis is not the interpreter: 'latiniers' may be for the sake of the rhyme.

⁴⁸⁸ See *laisse* 162.

319

The next one to come out was Tancred in the manner of a paladin. He had with him large numbers of proud but penniless young men; they were armoured with hauberks, helmets and shields from Beauvais, carrying strong unbending spears and purple pennants. Once they had crossed the bridge across the Orontes they stopped to one side. 'My lords,' said Tancred, 'I have something to tell you. Down the valley round that flag of silk from Andros is the greatest force of the descendants of Cain. Each of you must be sure to strike them down with his steel sword.' His men replied, 'My lord, may He who turned water into wine grant that the pagans and Saracens pay a heavy price.' Corbaran, that coward born of whores, watched them. Calling Amedelis, he said to him in his own language: 'Have you any idea who those people are, kicking up such a racket over there? The lord in charge of them doesn't exactly seem on his last legs. If you do know who they are please tell me, cousin.' The latter replied: 'My lord, by my god Apollon there is no better knight from here all the way to the Rhine. The Bretons and Angevins know him as Tancred. Pagans and Saracens have always come off much the worse when they met him.' Corbaran kept his head bowed on hearing this and muttered to himself, 'By tomorrow evening these arrogant rogues will have turned many children into orphans.' Red Lion added: 'They are good pilgrims. They will inflict sudden death on anyone who waits for them.'

320

It was then the turn of the valiant Bohemond to come out. In his company were Lombards and Tuscans armoured with hauberks and helmets and brightly ornamented shields; they had strong unbending spears with pennants dangling from them. They rode out at speed on their swift warhorses and stopped on the other side of the bridge in the fields outside the city. Many of his forces (though I do not know the exact number) were among those who had sold their mules and swift warhorses, but even so their hearts remained defiant and unbowed. 'My lords,' he said to them, 'listen to my words. Down the valley where you can see that flamboyant flag are Red Lion and the villainous Corbaran. They are surrounded by hordes of infidel cowards, whom you can see covering the hills and slopes. Don't lose heart at such large numbers: be determined to strike them down with your steel swords.' They replied: 'My lord, we shall be delighted to do as you wish. Let anyone who fails you be vilified for the rest of his life!' Corbaran watched them and said what he thought. 'Tell me, Amedelis, do you know these people? If you do, don't keep it a secret from me.'

'By my faith, my lord, I am telling you the unvarnished truth. This man is known as Bohemond, the noble soldier. He is more interested in battle than refined gold or bezants. Together with him are Lombards and Tuscans, a strong and proud people so ferocious that they will not spare any man for any living thing on this

earth.' When Corbaran heard this, all the blood drained from his face, and he said to himself: 'Unless Tervagant comes to my help now, and Mohammed my god on whom I depend, I am never going to see the kingdom of Persia again.' Red Lion commented: 'I am on the verge of making a break for it. Anyone who stays here waiting for them would be extremely misguided.'

321

The elderly veterans came out of the city, some 7000 of them in armour and on horseback.⁴⁸⁹ Their beards were whiter than meadow flowers [and fell] from beneath the visors of their helmets down to the fastening on their belts. To the onlookers it seemed that they had come down from celestial Paradise and that they were supernatural beings. They made their way out of the gate in tight ranks. You might have seen countless stout round shields, countless hauberks and countless helmets of refined gold with enamelled inlay, countless large spears and countless sharp blades, and countless silken banners fastened with golden nails. They stopped near an olive tree in the middle of the field, explaining to each other: 'God has shown His great love for us. We have escaped in one piece from several sticky situations, and now here we are ready to conquer His heritage. Let anyone who retreats as much as six measured inches faced with a pagan be considered old and faithless and his reputation suffer as a result! See Corbaran's tent with a golden dragon.'⁴⁹⁰ If our young striplings recently knighted fight better than us, then they can boast to us.' Corbaran watched them and made his views clear. Calling Amedelis, he asked: 'Do you have any idea who those people are who have halted over there? I have not seen anything quite like them today and that has unnerved me badly.'

'My lord,' replied the Arab, 'I shall tell you exactly who they are. These are excellent knights of long standing. They conquered Spain through their great prowess, and since they were born they have killed more pagans put together than you have brought here with you. Whatever the others may do, these are the really tough fighters. No matter how badly things go, they will not desert the battlefield.' Corbaran hung his head on hearing this and said to himself: 'We are in above our heads. Unless Mohammed, whom I have worshipped so fervently, spares me a thought, I shall never see my noble family again.' Red Lion commented: 'Things are turning out very badly for us. I wouldn't wait for these men [to attack] for the weight of 1000 gold marks.'

⁴⁸⁹ These are veterans of the wars in Spain, probably in the world of epic of Charlemagne's time rather than more recent, although Raymond IV had fought in Spain. The emphasis on whiteness is similar in RM (pp. 171–2, 174–5), and heavily emphasised by the *Canso* (vv. 127–31, 149–50).

⁴⁹⁰ As made very clear in the *Chétifs*, a dragon is a symbol of evil and by extension of the Saracens.

322

Walter of Domedart (who achieved many notable feats), Bernard (whom I have heard described as immensely charming),⁴⁹¹ Hugh of St-Pol and the noble Enguerrand were given a squadron to lead between the four of them. Enguerrand had armed himself for the day in a brightly shining mailed hauberk, with a gleaming green-sheened helmet fastened on his head: his equal could not be found anywhere in the army of Our Lord. The bishop of Le Puy called Adhemar began to sprinkle him with holy water. When he realised this Enguerrand shouted to him: 'Your Reverence, there is no need for you to throw that water around. I am too fond of my helmet to want it drenched, and I want it to look its best for the Saracens!' The bishop burst out laughing at these words. 'My friend,' he said to Enguerrand, 'may He, the potential Salvation of all, protect your mortal body from death and injury. Thus you can be sure of surviving the battle safe and sound.'⁴⁹² They marched out of the gate to attack the pagans. Had you been there you would have seen countless pennants fluttering in the wind, and countless hauberks and helmets glittering and catching the light. They crossed the bridge and drew up ranks in the field. Enguerrand of St-Pol did not bother to halt: instead he spurred his charger, making it go at full speed and turn in a pirouette three times in one acre. Corbaran of Oliferne watched him carefully. He called to Amedelis, 'Do you know his name? He cuts a fine figure of a soldier. Tell me at once if you know who he is.'

'My lord, these people from across the sea call him Enguerrand, and give him the soubriquet of Taillefer. Anyone he attacks has no further need of a doctor.'

'He is a scary opponent,' said Red Lion. 'I wouldn't take him on in battle for all the gold in Balaguer. If all the others are like him, we have no chance of escape.'

323

The next to come out was a true-born prince: the bishop of Le Puy, valiant and loyal. He was accompanied by a massive force of noble vassals, armed with hauberks, helmets and enamelled shields.⁴⁹³ They had stout unbending spears and silken pennants. They thundered out on their swift horses, their blood up for the fight, and took up position out on the field the other side of the bridge. The bishop addressed his companions cheerfully and enthusiastically. They could see the Saracens up on the mountains and down on the plains, kicking up a huge din

⁴⁹¹ Walter and his son Bernard of St-Valéry (Somme).

⁴⁹² This exchange between the bishop and Enguerrand is found only in BB, p. 76, n. 1, a variant from BB ms G.

⁴⁹³ It might be expected that Adhemar would lead the column of clergy which marches out later; however, RA refers to 'Provençals from the troops of Raymond and Adhémar' (p. 61), and AA also says Adhemar 'led the whole army of Provençals' (p. 331).

and commotion. ‘Don’t be intimidated by these cowardly villains,’ he told them. ‘You have been through an enormous amount of pain and suffering. Make sure you sell dearly the pain and misery and ferocious attacks you suffered.’ Corbaran, imposing and handsome, watched them. He called to Amedelis his seneschal.⁴⁹⁴ ‘Tell me, who is that prince? He seems truly royal.’

‘My lord, that is their bishop, a noble cardinal. He says Mass for them each morning at daybreak. He would rather give battle than go out [hunting] with gerfalcons.’ When the noble emir Corbaran heard this, he grew hot and sweated profusely in his panic, to the point where stains appeared on his ermine tunic. ‘This one is going to launch an attack on us,’ said Red Lion. ‘He carries the Lance like a true leader.’⁴⁹⁵

324

The valiant knight Peter of Astenois and the proud-faced Rainald of Toul put together a squadron of noble knights from their region, Lorrainers and Frisians.⁴⁹⁶ There were nearly 10,000 of them. They put on their white hauberks and rode out at speed on their swift chargers. Had you been there you would have seen countless excellent burnished spears, and shields decorated and brightly painted in blue. They stopped in some scrubland over towards the sea. They would already have been off towards the Saracens and pushing forward all the way to Corbaran’s tent had the bishop not sent them to the rear. He begged them persuasively in the name of God [the lord] of Paradise to exercise discipline in their attack on the Arabs. Corbaran watched them and called to Amedelis: ‘Tell me now, brother, if you know who these are.’ He replied: ‘My lord, I stand ready to do so. It is Peter of Astenois and the marquis Rainald who are leading them mounted on valuable horses. There is none more ready for battle in the entire Frankish army: they have mutilated and killed a large number of our Saracens.’ Corbaran did not find this amusing or entertaining. ‘The man who told us that all those in the city were wretches reduced to eating their packhorses from sheer need has a lot to answer for,’ he muttered to himself. ‘If Mohammed does not spare us a thought now in his infinite mercy, I for one shall not be seeing the kingdom of Persia again.’

‘I am scared to death,’ said Red Lion. ‘I would not wait for these people [to attack] for sixty realms.’

⁴⁹⁴ Amedelis was the interpreter above; seneschal fits the rhyme.

⁴⁹⁵ Unclear whether this refers just to a lance or to the Holy Lance; Adhemar carried the latter into battle according to the poem.

⁴⁹⁶ Rainald of Toul is given his own column in OV (pp. 110–11); in *GF* his column splits off to form a separate squad (p. 69).

325

The squadron of clergy marched out of the city, wearing their albs tightly belted and tucked in and carrying such arms as they were permitted.⁴⁹⁷ They drew up ranks in the field on the other side of the bridge. The wisest man among them began to preach.⁴⁹⁸ 'My lords, do not lose heart,' he said to them. 'Most of you led a very comfortable existence in your lands back home: you were well dressed and equipped, transported around and bathed. But you have left all that behind you for the love of God. Anyone who dies for His sake will have accomplished something special and won a resting-place in God's holy Paradise.' They responded as one: 'We shall not waver in our purpose. We shall do this with a good will for love of Him.' Corbaran looked at them. He raised his head and asked Amedelis, 'Who are those drawn up?' Amedelis replied: 'My lord, they are full of joy and gladness; they are brave and swift, noble and well bred. All the others are taught and instructed by them, baptised into the faith they all hold. However when they are back at home they are not allowed by their Lord to carry arms, neither lance nor spear.' On hearing this Corbaran commented: 'In that case we have little need to be scared of them or take them very seriously.'

'That is hardly the case,' riposted Amedelis. 'It was made abundantly clear to them inside the city that if they did not defend themselves they were in effect condemned to death, and those who think they are facing death fight ferociously. By the time they are all mutilated and killed, they will have put paid to many of our Turks.' Corbaran flew into a temper on hearing this. 'We are in deep trouble if Mohammed does not take matters in hand.'

'I shall humiliate them,' said Red Lion. 'As far as I can see they are not armed and will be easily outpaced. They will hardly be able to pursue me on foot if I am on horseback.'

326

The Tafur King came out [of the city] with his noble forces, accompanied by the wise pilgrim Peter the Hermit with his strong sturdy staff in his hand. Together they formed an extremely large company of hardened vassals, some 10,000 as you will hear. Had you been there you would have seen countless tattered rags, countless long beards and matted heads of hair, countless thin and desiccated and faded [bodies], countless twisted spines and swollen stomachs, countless crippled legs and feet sticking out at all angles, countless burnt calves and worn-out shoes.

⁴⁹⁷ Clergy were prohibited from shedding blood, and could therefore carry only weapons like maces and staffs. The battalion of clergy is found in BB, but not in other sources (p. 76). RA refers to the clergy marching out alongside the soldiers though not fighting (p. 62).

⁴⁹⁸ Apparently not Adhemar.

They carried Danish axes and sharp knives, thrusting weapons and maces and stakes. The King carried a scythe of tempered steel: anyone he attacked with it would be very badly injured.⁴⁹⁹ He stopped in the field the other side of the bridge and said to his companions: ‘Gentlemen, listen to me. You have suffered enough from famine and misery. As the rustic so truly says, more honourable to have one’s head cut off than to suffer too much deprivation for too long.⁵⁰⁰ You can see gold and silver sparkling all over these fields. Anyone who can win it by force will find his fortunes transformed: he will never be called a poor man again in his life.’ His men replied, ‘My lord, your orders will be obeyed. Anyone who flees on the battlefield will be shamed as a coward and never see God in His holy majesty!’ Corbaran watched, then rose to his feet. Calling Amedelis, he said to him: ‘Now look. Do you recognise that set of people gathered over there? They are horrible to look at, barely clad and only just human: more like devils set loose from Hell.⁵⁰¹ If you know who they are, tell me straight away.’ Amedelis replied: ‘Let me put you in the picture immediately. The people you are asking me about are diabolical enemies. They would rather eat man’s flesh than spiced swan.⁵⁰² They cook and eat our soldiers.’ Corbaran was so terrified at hearing this that he would not have gone near them for a full 1000 marks of gold. ‘Amedelis,’ he said, ‘on your oath, don’t bring me even a step closer to those men. By my renowned God Mohammed, those people scare and worry me more than all these armed opponents put together.’ Red Lion listened to all this and said, ‘I won’t wait around to meet these people, not even those with the tonsure.’

327

My lords, you will enjoy hearing about this squadron.⁵⁰³ The women who had set off in the service of Our Lord got together in the middle of Antioch to discuss a plan of action. ‘There is no point beating about the bush,’ they said to each other, ‘our menfolk are marching out there to attack the Turks. But if God’s will is that

⁴⁹⁹ The description of the Tafurs and their weapons is deliberately unknighly.

⁵⁰⁰ The rustic here refers to *Li Proverbe au Vilain* which is punctuated with “si dist li villain”. This proverb however is not in the extant version: *Li Proverbe au Vilain: die Sprichwörter des gemeinen Mannes altfranzösische Dichtung*, ed. A. Tobler (Leipzig, 1895). AA has a similar sentiment: hunger is sharper than the sword (p. 375), a sentiment that goes back to Vegetius, iii. 3: ‘ferro saevior fames est’ (‘hunger is more savage than the sword’): *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*, trans. N.P. Milner (Liverpool, 1996), p. 67.

⁵⁰¹ Inversion: usually Christians describe Saracens as devils. Appropriate to the behaviour of the Tafurs.

⁵⁰² A particular delicacy although actually rather tough: Spencer, pp. 60, 87. For a recipe see Austin, p. 78 (from Harleian ms 4016). The reputation of the Tafurs as cannibals is evoked again.

⁵⁰³ Not, needless to say, historically attested. See Introduction, chapter 3.

they die in the attempt, those wretches will take us captive and ruin us. Better then to suffer death alongside our men.'

'May it be as God pleases!' they all cried in unison. They ran to their lodgings to seize staffs, tying their wimples back to stop them flapping in the wind. Many of them picked up stones and carried them in their sleeves; others filled vessels with fresh water to ensure those who wanted a drink could have one. They marched out of the gate to see their lords and masters. Corbaran gazed as they marched out. He asked Amedelis, whom he saw sitting next to him: 'Are these really women I can see coming out now?'

'Yes – in faith, my lord, I agree that it is. Battle is imminent: get ready to strike blows.' Corbaran heaved a sigh on hearing this, and said to himself: 'I have no idea how to get out of this one. Unless Mohammed, the lord of all, spares us a thought, we shall never see our homes again.'

'Although I like the sound of this, I am so scared that hearing it gives me little pleasure,' said Red Lion.

328

Once the women had organised themselves on the battlefield their menfolk – who adored them – gazed at them, pale with pity for them. Then they closed the visors of their white armour before scrutinising the sharp blades of their swords.⁵⁰⁴ They were so upset that they swore on their faith that their womenfolk would be captured only at a high price. Corbaran watched them narrowly from his tent. 'Amedelis,' he commented, 'I shall have these women presented to me. I shall carry them off with me on comfortably saddled mules, and have them well married off to my Turks.'

'You may well have found them,' said Amedelis. 'Little do you know about their husbands. Before [you can have them] you will have had a terrible drubbing; lots of your Saracens will have had their beards shaved off, and their golden shields smashed and pierced through; many will have had their souls cut from their bodies. If you are determined to have these women, you will pay a high price for them.'

'In faith,' said Corbaran, 'a strange thought has struck me. I cannot forget your long series of insults. Today you have praised their company to the skies. I think you are going to become a Christian. They will reward you for it with towers and tiled chambers in Antioch.'

'My lord,' said the Arab, 'on the contrary, my reward will be from you when you have killed and slaughtered their soldiers. Then you will march in strength into their extensive lands. That is where our wives will be crowned as queens.'

⁵⁰⁴ The OF word we have translated as 'armour' is 'aubers', hauberk. However these do not have visors. The image is clearly and anachronistically a suit of armour with a helmet.

With that their conversation was over and done with, and all our squadrons had marched out of Antioch.⁵⁰⁵

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Their discussion came to an end and they said no more. By now all our forces had marched out of the city. The bishop of Le Puy spoke first, delivering an extremely powerful sermon. ‘My lords,’ he said to them, ‘bless the hour in which you were born. Remember all the agonies you have suffered, the hunger, the thirst and the utter wretchedness. You are all sons and daughters of one line: you are all descended from the first man Adam,⁵⁰⁶ and so you must hold one another in high regard. See your enemies, halted over there. Don’t despair even if there seem to be hordes of them. Be ready instead to fight them. God in His great majesty will send you the legion of angels, who will come ready armed.⁵⁰⁷ Today they will be seen and recognised in the press of battle; it is not the first time they have come or indeed returned. Anyone who dies for God will have made a good conquest indeed and will be rewarded for it on the day of the Last Judgement: he will wear a crown on his head together with the holy angels, and all the sins you have committed will be forgiven you.’ Our men found new heart on hearing this. Every single one would rather have had his head cut off than retreat as much as six inches from the pagans. The lines of battle formed themselves into order. The companies extended up the valley in the middle of the battlefield. The line stretched from the river all the way to the mountains, two leagues long according to an eyewitness.⁵⁰⁸ Corbaran looked at them and gave his views: ‘The people I can see over there have excellent morale and are equipped with extremely high quality horses and arms. In my judgement cowardice has not even crossed their minds.’ He summoned the Provençal [spy], who had told him all about how [the Christians] were dying of hunger and misery. ‘Where did you get all that from, you son of a whore?’ he said. ‘You said they were so starved in there that they were reduced to the shameful expedient of eating their horses. We are completely betrayed and shamed, and it is your fault. You will pay for this and no mistake.’ He called an order to a Turk, who beheaded [the Provençal]. Thus the lecher paid dearly for his words.⁵⁰⁹ [Corbaran]

⁵⁰⁵ This line, not found in all manuscripts, marks the end of the set piece description of the forces marching out.

⁵⁰⁶ As, of course, are the Saracen opponents.

⁵⁰⁷ A reference to the white forces who come to the aid of the Christians in the *GF* and texts derived from it: *GF*, p. 69; *PT*, p. 87, *RM*, pp. 171–2. None of these, however, specifies that angels are involved. *RA* comments that five columns were miraculously added to the existing eight (p. 63); *FC* refers to ‘heaven-sent fear’ (p. 106). See Introduction, chapter 2.

⁵⁰⁸ This is close to a comment made by *RA*, who was an eyewitness: it is interesting that the *Antioche* seems to be aware of this (*RA*, p. 62).

⁵⁰⁹ This episode is in *RM*, pp. 168–9. It has already been foreshadowed in *laisse* 302.

summoned his chancellor and said to him discreetly: 'When you see a fire lit in our army, take it as a sign to remove all my treasure which you have guarded with such devotion. Make it your business to escape because you can take that as a clear signal that we have been overwhelmed and entirely defeated.'⁵¹⁰

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Corbaran of Oliferne stood proudly on a high dais. He wore an expensive silk woven in Carthage with a pattern of animals and flowers as well as birds in flight and beautifully depicted sea fish.⁵¹¹ He was tall and strongly built and with a proud countenance. Once he had finished scrutinising the Frankish nobility, he summoned Amedelis and said in his own language: 'Go and tell those savage bastards of Franks (may Mohammed curse them and all their descendants!) that I shall fight them if they have the stomach for it twenty against twenty, or ten against ten, outside on that meadow, or one brave champion against another. If their champion is defeated, they will issue no further challenge but retreat and pay tribute. If it is our champion who is defeated let there be no other damage: let the kingdom of Syria come to them along with all Jerusalem without any need to do homage for it.'

'What you have just said is totally shameful,' replied Amedelis. 'When they sent Peter as their messenger to make you that offer, you told them you were too proud [to accept] and that their offer was a complete insult.'⁵¹²

'Minion!' said Corbaran, 'You are a fool and I am not interested in your ridiculous views.' Amedelis was noble and of a highly aristocratic line. He flung himself into the saddle of an Aragonese charger and rode post-haste across to the Franks.⁵¹³

⁵¹⁰ The fire occurs in many of the sources although its significance varies. In some it is lit to confuse the Christians: RA, p.63; AA, p. 327; RC, pp. 109–10 (who turns it into a battle of the winds); in *GF*, pp. 68–9 and related texts, e.g. PT, it is a signal to retreat (p. 87), as it is here following RM (p. 172); in the *Canso* it marks the start of battle (vv. 349–50).

⁵¹¹ Typical Saracen luxury, if hardly practical for the battlefield. Not unrealistic however: see Usāmah ibn Munqidh, *An Arab–Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades*, trans. P.K. Hitti (New York, 1929), p. 35, where Usāmah describes a gift of siglaton silk and Damietta brocade.

⁵¹² This episode is also found in FC (p. 105) and RA (p. 62–3), where a messenger is sent to make the offer; however the *Antioche* turns it into a powerful narrative device.

⁵¹³ Although these lines make it clear that Amedelis is not an employed interpreter (see also note to *laisse* 313 above), he is able to communicate with the Franks.

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Amedelis was brave, noble and a fluent speaker. He reached the Franks and greeted them. He stopped immediately in front of the bishop of Le Puy and addressed him as follows: 'Listen to what I have to say, my lord. Our rightful leader Corbaran of Oliferne has sent me to tell you – doubt me if you dare – that he will now offer battle on exactly the terms you requested: either twenty on twenty or ten on ten out here on the fields, or one brave champion in single combat against another. If your man is overcome, you will go back to your own land safe and sound and with no obligations: you will lose nothing at all. If our man comes off worse and loses his life, the kingdom of Syria will be handed over to you free of obligation and the fine city of Jerusalem will be yours.' When our men heard these terms, many of them said to the bishop: 'My lord, accept. Pick out the best knights Holy Christendom will ever have whom you can find in the army.' The news went like wildfire through the whole army and had a serious impact on the morale of our men. The count of Normandy, a baron seasoned in battle, was down the valley with his squadron, armed and on horseback.⁵¹⁴ When he heard the rising hubbub, he looked at [the army], then said to his men: 'Wait for me here. I shall be back with you as soon as I possibly can. As for you, my noble friend who carries my banner, ensure you do not move as much as a step forward.' He spurred across with a few men of his household, crying: 'What on earth is going on, you idiots? I can see you are in a terrible state.'

'My lord, let me put you in the picture straight away,' said the bishop. 'Corbaran of Oliferne has sent word to us all that he is now willing to give battle as discussed earlier.'

'My lord,' said the count, 'don't even speak about it. There is no way we are going to, not even for 1000 marks of gold all weighed out. We have left our castles and forts behind for the sake of God, our wives, our children and all our extensive inheritance. Today has dawned as the day when we either become martyrs with our heads cut off or we conquer our enemies with the swords at our sides. May it be the pleasure of Our God who was hanged on the Cross that all the peoples of the East are here together so they can all be killed and slaughtered in one fell swoop!' Then he addressed the Arab: 'Go back, vassal. Don't mince your words. Tell your master that Bohemond and Tancred and all the other nobles you see here defy him to the death. Before evening comes and the day draws to its end, the battlefield will be empty either of his men or of ours!'

⁵¹⁴ Robert of Normandy is given the role of rallying the troops, not the only instance in the text where he is shown playing a role not attested in the sources. WM also retails material about Robert's heroic role on Crusade, suggesting that some echo of the same tradition may be reflected here (vol. 1, pp. 701–7). In *GF* his only exploit is to capture the enemy standard at Ascalon (p. 95).

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When the Arab heard the count speak in this way, he waited no longer: he turned and hastened away. Seeing Corbaran standing in front of the royal tent, he made his way over and told him how he had got on with the Franks and what they intended to do. 'My lord,' he said, 'perhaps you would like to hear the response the leaders from overseas have instructed me to give you. You will never force them back into the city, not even for as much land as can be encompassed in a gaze. I heard Robert of Normandy implore God that every last one of our faith who could be found should be there; then I heard him swear that if so not a single one would escape.' When Corbaran heard this he paused for thought. Then he stood up and ordered his men to arm themselves. At this bugles and brass horns could be heard sounding, and the wicked pagans armed themselves in their tents. Corbaran of Olfierne went to his charger and mounted. You might have seen the prince spurting through the army putting heart into his leaders and raising the morale of his troops as he drew up his proud squadrons into battle order. According to what I have been told there were 50 of them there that day, and he commanded 50 pagan kings to lead them. His orders to Red Lion were as follows: 'I command you to go and launch an initial attack on the forces who are down towards the sea. I intend to lead my force round by the mountain and order my archers to surround the Franks to ensure that not one of them ever sees his home again.'⁵¹⁵

'My noble lord, I shall do as you say,' replied Red Lion.

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The Turkish forces split into two parts. One remained on the battlefield ready for action; the other turned and marched down the valley towards the sea under the command of Red Lion. That was where the squadron led by Lord Rainald had taken up position, nearly 10,000 good quality armed men. When they saw the Turks spurting down towards them at top speed, banging drums and tabors and making such a noise that the hillsides and the valley echoed with it; they rode towards them in the agreed order. As the two clashed there was an almighty noise. Countless spears were smashed and shields holed, countless mailhoods ripped and hauberks torn, and countless Saracens left lying dead on the blood-drenched grass. However, the proud Turks had huge numbers and left our men defeated and dying. Anyone who could not flee had his head cut off. The courageous Rainald of Toul had his chestnut-backed horse killed beneath him; his shield was pierced through and his hauberk smashed, and he was unlucky enough to find himself marooned in the midst of the battle.

⁵¹⁵ This evokes the classic Saracen tactic of outflanking the enemy using mounted archers: RA describes the use of this tactic in the battle (p. 63).

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The noble Rainald of Toul was down on foot. He had been struck through the body by four sharp javelins and had more than a thousand Turkish arrows shot at him. When he saw his death staring him in the face he was overcome by rage. He drew his sword and took up his shield. He singled out a Turk and struck him down through the helmet, slicing his head in two down to the teeth. Picture him among all these infidels! Anyone he attacked was defeated and killed. He slaughtered and smashed and slashed his way through large numbers of them. Had he been able to hold onto life any longer he would have sold it dearly. However, he had lost so much blood from his wounds that he collapsed on the ground, unable to help himself. He implored God and His miracles: 'Glorious Lord God, who was and will be for all time, take mercy on my soul: my mortal body is done for.' He signed five times towards our race of Frenchmen. Then he broke off three blades of grass from in front of him and used them in honour of God. He made his confession. His soul left, leaving his body sprawled [on the ground]. The angels sang to him: '*Te deum laudamus*.' They carried him up to Heaven in obedience to our King Jesus Christ. The bishop, who was in God's counsels, saw this happen.⁵¹⁶

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So passed Rainald, that noble knight. Red Lion made his way round through the scrubland with 30,000 Turks, all mounted on Moorish steeds. Most of his household was carrying Greek fire in small brass pots. They tossed this onto the Franks, maddening their horses and burning their equipment.⁵¹⁷ As you can imagine, this made our men extremely anxious and demoralised. At this point their spiritual leader the bishop of Le Puy intervened. He shouted to our men in a loud voice: 'Noble knights and gentlemen, it would be a valiant deed if we were to charge those forces now. If they survive for any length of time we are the ones who will suffer for it. I shall ride out in front in the name of the Holy Cross.'

'That would be fitting and proper,' replied the nobles. Robert of Normandy and Duke Godfrey had Normans and Germans in their squadrons. They gave their chargers – brown, piebald and black – their heads. They inflicted prodigious blows on the Saracens with their trusty Viennese swords, ripping their mailed hoods and the gold-threaded panels of their hauberks. The [Greek] fire worried them about as

⁵¹⁶ In AA Rainald is still alive at the battle of Ascalon (pp. 462–3). Rainald's death scene follows a well-known topos in the *chanson de geste*: see W. Sylvester, 'The communions, with three blades of grass, of the knights-errant', *DR*, 121: 23 (1897), pp. 80–98. The five signs signify the five wounds of Christ.

⁵¹⁷ AA has a similar description of the Turks starting fire with Greek fire in small pots as part of battle tactics (pp. 326–7).

much as a quarter of a nut. By God! They killed innumerable Persians and Indians who were barely able to defend themselves against our men.

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The count of Normandy was a seasoned vassal; the duke of Bouillon was brave and much feared. Anyone the pair of them attacked found his days at an end. There was a scene of countless spears broken and shields pierced through, countless mailed hoods torn and hauberks damaged, and countless Saracens dead, mutilated and wounded: the whole meadow was splashed with the blood they had lost. When Red Lion, who had led them there, saw the counts and how ferociously they were attacking, not all the gold of Balaguer would have been enough to make him wait for their onslaught. He swung his horse round and turned to flee; with him went any who had managed to escape. They did not draw rein all the way to Corbaran's tent, where Red Lion harangued Corbaran angrily: 'Emir, what on earth are you doing? My men have been killed and I have virtually no forces left.' Corbaran nearly went berserk when he heard this. He yelled at the top of his voice: 'Men of mine! What do you say to this? Avenge me on these wretches and take their princes captive. I shall shackle them all in chains and lead them to Persia. Once I have presented them to my lord they will be his to do with as he pleases.' They replied: 'My lord, we shall do as you command.' Then you might have heard bugles and brass horns sounded. Unless Jesus who was hanged on the Cross turns His attention their way, many of our men are going to be mutilated and killed. But Count Robert has joined our troops: picture them all drawn up together in ranks.

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Corbaran turned towards the mountain, accompanied by Arabs and Persians. It was over there that the valiant Bohemond was stationed, and that was where the battle, miraculous and hard-fought, began. By God! How many noble men lost their lives that day, never to see their wives or children again. The other squadrons in the Frankish army rode forward in tight ranks at a gentle pace, led by their princes on dark-coloured horses. There was not enough empty space for a glove to fall to the ground. No count or emir had ever seen such admirable forces. Had you been there, you would have seen countless gleaming green-sheened helmets; countless sturdy lance shafts and good sharp blades, and countless rich flags fluttering above in the wind. The Turks, however, assailed them with their vicious Turkish bows: rain pouring from the clouds is not thicker than the arrows falling on our French forces.⁵¹⁸ Anyone who could not take shelter suffered badly; I do not know how

⁵¹⁸ Saracens typically used arrows in rapid crossfire, being too cowardly (according to the Franks) to fight at close quarters: Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 2, pp. 951–4.

many of our rank and file were killed, and the swift warhorses were shot from under our knights; anyone who did stay on his feet was in a sorry state, his shield over his back and attacked from every angle. Compared to this the terrible ordeals of Oliver or Roland, or the suffering of Iaumon or Agolant or the noble Vivien on the Aliscamps were not worth three bezants.⁵¹⁹ When [the Christians] thought they had got near enough the cowardly infidels to strike them with their steel swords, their enemy turned and fled back towards the mountains across the battlefield.

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When our brave soldiers reckoned they had ridden far enough forward to launch an attack on the Turks, their enemies did not have the courage to wait for them: instead they turned and fled. The Christians told each other: 'Thank you, Almighty God! The battle has moved away from us; let's go and look for it elsewhere.' At this point picture a messenger come spurring up. He shouted for Count Hugh and said to him between sobs: 'My lord, the good Duke Bohemond is sending to you for help in the name of God the Redeemer: he is in a desperate position, hard pressed by the cowardly infidels.' The noble [Hugh] was horrified to hear this. He cried: 'God's will be done! Forward, gentlemen! Now you can have the battle you are so keen on.' When the handsome duke of Bouillon saw the count spurring off ahead at such speed, he and his companions followed on behind because he held the count dearer than anyone else on earth. Count Hugh of Vermandois came spurring up to the mêlée, lance straight and banner billowing. The very first [enemy] he met was a Persian who was inflicting great losses on the army of Our Lord. The count, resolute in anger, struck him so hard that neither shield nor mailed hood were any protection: he plunged his razor-sharp spear straight into his heart and flung him dead onto the slope with the full thrust of his lance. Then he drew his sword with its glittering golden pommel and hacked his way through the thick of the battle like a true warrior. Now you will hear a song if anyone wishes for one.

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While the count was busy killing the [Saracen] wretch, we suffered a great loss in the person of a noble baron from Beauvais, Eudes by name, the standard-bearer of

⁵¹⁹ Oliver and Roland both died in combat against the Saracens at Roncevaux in the *Roland*. Iaumon and Agolant are central characters in the *Aspremont*, where they are defeated by Roland. Vivien is the son of Garin d'Anseüne who dies at the Aliscans, described memorably and at length in the *Guillaume* (vv. 784–928). Laisse 358 has a further comparison with Roland and Oliver. The Crusade acquires glamour and legendary status through comparison with some of the most famous episodes in the *chansons de geste*.

Count Hugh.⁵²⁰ Picture a proud and wicked Turk shooting the valiant Eudes with a poisoned arrow that penetrated first his hauberk then his cotton padded jacket and went right into his liver and lungs. The baron toppled over dead and the standard with him. The French and Burgundians, Angevins and those from Maine, the Lorrainers and Frisians were all appalled: a great roar went up; there was a huge hubbub, and the clash of swords in horrendously bitter fighting. Picture William spurting forward: he was from Beauvais and a very noble man. He drew the sword that hung at his side and plunged into the battle like a lion: anyone he attacked had no time to ask for a ransom before having his head sliced off below the chin. He raised the standard regardless of any objections. Now picture Godfrey of Bouillon spurting up along with Wicher the Swabian, his valiant companion.

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Count Hugh of Vermandois saw Eudes lying dead, rivulets of blood coming out of his handsome body.⁵²¹ He was so upset as to be nearly beside himself, and lamented him eloquently as you can hear: 'Alas, noble lord, how dearly I prize you! You have always done the utmost to serve me. May the Lord who stooped to suffer death for us men have mercy on your soul by His holy will. If I cannot avenge you now, I do not deserve to hold any lands.' Enraged beyond measure, he spurred his horse forward, brandishing his lance by its grip. He went for a Turk with unerring aim; he shattered the buckler of the shield, ripped and tore the fine gold mailed hood, sliced the heart in his chest right through and struck him so hard that he knocked him flying. Then he let fly with a taunt: 'Away! God's curse on you, coward and lecher. That is what you get for inflicting such pain on me.'

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The noble duke of Bouillon reached the battle: along with him came the well-known vassal Wicher the Swabian, whom the duke held in great esteem because of his bravery. He had a force of more than 2,000 shields. The duke flung himself into the thickest press of the fight. Anyone he attacked was a dead man with no hope of escape. He ran across a tall and well-built Arab who rushed to attack him the moment he saw him. The duke saw him coming. His blood up, he gave the Arab such a blow with his tempered sword right on top of his helmet of beaten gold that he sliced right down through to the teeth; as he twisted the sword out the Arab fell down dead. His companions renewed the attack with their tempered swords. A vicious battle ensued, in which more than 1000 Saracens were decapitated.

⁵²⁰ Eudes of Beauvais is RM's Odo of Beaugency (p. 171).

⁵²¹ The death of Eudes is the starting point for a series of *laisses similaires* in which the leaders of the Crusade successively engage in combat.

Innumerable good warhorses, sorrel and bay with flowing manes, fled across the valleys and the tall craggy hillsides, their saddles slewed round and their reins snapped. Yet there were so many of the cowardly infidels that, unless God in his strength turns His mind to them, a large number of our men will be overthrown and killed.

342

Count Robert of Flanders was valiant and bold. He came into battle with a good 1000 armoured men, sitting armed on a valuable warhorse. He hurled himself into the thickest part of the struggle, and anyone he attacked could be certain of death. He came across an emir originally from Persia, who had inflicted much damage on the people of Our Lord, blaspheming against his laws and dishonouring his followers. The noble [count] flew into a rage when he saw him. He gave him such a mighty blow with his shining spear on the top of his solid gold helmet that he slashed right through all the way to the neck. When he twisted the weapon to pull it out, [the Persian] was left lying dead in the undergrowth. Battle was joined with determination and vigour, with not a single Persian showing signs of cowardice or confusion. Countless lances were splintered and shields smashed, countless mailed hoods of refined gold torn and ripped, and countless Saracens left dead, horribly wounded and cut about. But the numbers of Persians and Arabs were so great that, unless God, King of Paradise, turns His attention towards them, many of our men will be defeated and it will go the worse with them.

343

Tancred joined the battle with a noble squadron: nearly 10,000 good courageous men. He came up against an extremely powerful emir who had inflicted a great deal of damage on the people of Our Lord and blasphemed against and denigrated the way of Our Lord. As soon as the noble duke glimpsed him in all his arrogance, he landed such a mighty blow on his gaily painted shield that he pierced right through the buckler and shattered it; he ripped his mailed hood of glittering gold and aimed his sturdy spear right into the middle of his heart, sending him sprawling onto the meadow in death. ‘Away, you coward!’ he said, ‘Shame on all your kindred!’ His companions rained blows down on the hated [Saracens] and battle raged. But there were so many Persians that, if God the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary does not turn His thoughts to them, our people will be defeated in very short order, and it will go the worse with them.

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The count of Normandy had a proud demeanour. He made for the battle with rather more than just a handful of men; they numbered getting on for 10,000 with not a single coward among them. The noble [count] was sitting on a grey and white warhorse: he hurled himself into the midst of the fray like a leopard. He cut a swathe through the villainous Saracens, and the pagans found him very eager to take them on. Corbaran was armed and certainly no coward.⁵²² His shield was of refined gold, impervious to lance or dart; his helmet had been forged in the city of Baghdad and had a fiery carbuncle glittering on the nose-guard; his barbed spear was strong and sturdy with a curved blade; and a parrot was painted on the shield slung round his neck. When the count caught sight of him he made straight for where he was and landed such a mighty blow on his round shield that he sent him sprawling like a fool, legs in the air.⁵²³ Indeed, he would not have thought twice about cutting off his head had not the pagans and Azoparts come to the rescue, carrying their lord off back to his standard.⁵²⁴

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They carried Corbaran straight to the tent that served as his headquarters, near [the mosque of] la Mahomerie and guarded by Africans. It was completely covered with Median silk, the panels and flaps patterned with gold banding. The ropes were of silk and the tentpoles of ivory. The Syrians had with exquisite artistry painted it with the stories of the Old Testament back from the time of Adam onwards.

⁵²² Literally 'Lombard' (T-L, vol. 5, p. 624). Further to Robert's heroism, see WM (vol. 1, pp. 701–7); *Le Roman de Rou de Wace*, ed. A.J. Holden (3 vols, Paris, 1970–73), vol. 2, vv. 9685–98 (v. 9691 his attack on Corbaran).

⁵²³ A 'begart' is a heretic who thinks himself perfect and therefore above religious and secular law: used as a synonym for stupidity; the term is attested in the thirteenth century. It is used to denote a fool or hypocrite (T-L, vol. 1, pp. 900–901).

⁵²⁴ It is Robert of Normandy who has the honour of felling Corbaran. This was clearly a story current early in the twelfth century: it was shown on a window in St-Denis which disappeared in the French Revolution; according to Dom Bernard de Montfaucon, *Les monumens de la monarchie française* (5 vols, Paris, 1729–33), the window contained eight scenes from the First Crusade, one showing Robert aiming his lance and captioned 'R Dux Normannorum Partum prosternit' (vol. 1, pp. 390–7). See also E.A.R. Brown and M.W. Cothren, 'The twelfth-century crusading window of the Abbey of St-Denis: *Praeteritorum Enim Recordatio Futurorum est Exhibitio*', *JWCI*, 49 (1986), pp. 1–40. In itself this would be ambiguous, but the legend also appears in WM (vol. 1, pp. 701–7) and is repeated by Geffrei Gaimar, *L'estoire des Engleis*, ed. Alexander Bell (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960), v. 5749 and Wace, vv. 9685–98. The *Antioche* changes the legend to ensure that Corbaran remains alive to feature in the *Chétifs*. For Robert's record on Crusade and general reputation, see W. M. Aird, *Robert Curthose: Duke of Normandy* (Woodbridge, 2008).

They laid Corbaran in a bed of Spanish gold; but before he could [even] recover from the shock and pain, he suffered so much at the hands of the Bavarians and Germans, the French, Burgundians, people of Maine and the Normans, that he would rather have been the other side of the river Jordan. He hurried to mount his piebald warhorse. At this more than 60,000 Arabs and Persians blew their horns and sounded numerous bugle calls.

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Corbaran of Oliferne had heard how things stood. As soon as he could, he cried in a loud voice: 'Bring me my weapons! May Mohammed help me against these pathetic wretches who are attacking me so determinedly!' He hastened to arm himself in true pagan style. A regiment of 50,000 Turks guarded him all day to ensure that no Frenchman could kill him. He and his huge bodyguard came spurting up to join the fray. However, our noble soldiers from the joyous land [of France] had no intention of refusing to join battle with the Turks: on the contrary each struck fiercely with burnished sword. No such feat had been seen on earth since Jesus Christ became flesh in the Virgin Mary! [Our men] struck and hacked about the detested pagans so strongly that they pushed them back by sheer force an acre and a half towards Matomarie.⁵²⁵ That was where Corbaran's tent and mosque were to be found, surmounted by a dragon of glittering gold – a symbol of his great power.

347

Now imagine you see Brohadas spurting his way through the battle with 30,000 Turks descended from Judas. He wore a mailed hood of fine gold that had been made in Damascus; his helmet had been forged on the banks of the river Euphrates; his shield was strong and tough, belonging previously to King Jonathan; his hood and sleeves were made of two very precious fabrics, one being samite and the other from Constantinople. He shouted at the top of his voice: 'I am going to make these losers suffer! I shall take them to my father in the city of Baghdad!' He spurred his horse out of a walking pace, lowering his strong lance from an upright to a couched position. He killed an Auvergnat from the bishop's squadron, then capered around in cocky delight. The good duke of Bouillon overheard his boasts and said to himself: 'You coward. You will regret saying that. You will pay a very high price if I manage to attack you.'

⁵²⁵ Matomarie may be a scribal error for 'Mahomerie', Tancred's tower opposite the mosque: see note to *laisse* 146.

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The good duke of Bouillon heard the din kicked up by the pagan, who was yelling and shouting. He thought it would be inexcusable not to go and strike him. He dug his spurs into his Arab warhorse and brandished his lance, gripping its hilt. He launched an attack on the wretch, not realising who he was. He smashed his shield apart right on its boss; he ripped and tore the fine gold mailed hood and sliced his heart in two inside his chest; he thrust with all his strength and the pagan fell. Then he taunted him. 'You liar! None of our men will ever suffer shameful defeat at your hands.'⁵²⁶ The Saracens were appalled at the sight. More than 50,000 of them lamented him so violently that the earth echoed for a league around.

349

The death of Brohadas provoked terrible anguish. That day more than 50,000 wept for him. Corbaran was so upset that he could not possibly have grieved more. He lamented him eloquently, saying affectionately: 'Alas, Lord Brohadas! What an end for all your courage, your strength and your vigour! I considered you the best of my knights. Your death will be a great loss for many people to bear and they will lament you, great and least alike. Your father and your fair mother will suffer more than they have ever suffered in their lives. Alas, Lord Brohadas, son of the emperor – whatever am I going to say to my lord your father after he implored me so fervently and courteously to protect your person against the Franks? I have done a poor job of keeping you safe. I can never return home because of you: how can I ever go back to pagan territories?' Corbaran was absolutely right to be scared. The Sultan thenceforward considered him a wicked traitor. If it had been possible he would have aimed a javelin at him all the way from his lofty palace in Sarmazane. Corbaran, furious at the turn of events, bellowed his battle cry.

350

Corbaran bellowed his battlecry at the top of his voice. More than 50,000 of the infidels converged on the press of battle to avenge Brohadas. There is a proverb that says – and has been proved accurate – that the more a man suffers shame, the keener he is to avenge it.⁵²⁷ And so our noble forces from the fortunate land [of

⁵²⁶ The death of Brohadas is a key narrative device for linking the Cycle together: see Introduction, chapter 1. It is fitting that Godfrey, the protagonist of the Cycle, should inflict the death blow. The importance of the episode is marked by *laisses similaires*.

⁵²⁷ Again this proverb is not in *Li proverbe au vilain*, although proverb 150 is not dissimilar: 'mal venge la honte, qui l'acroist' ('increasing shame is a poor way to avenge it').

France] most certainly did not refuse Turkish company. Had you been there that day you would have seen countless heads cut off and on the same day countless shields pierced; countless feet and hands and legs twisted in all directions, and countless swift chestnut-backed warhorses fleeing up into the mountains with saddles slewed round. Indeed [our men] pushed their troops back by sheer force. The colour drained from Corbaran's face when he saw this. His consternation was clearly visible on his face. He would rather have had his soul cut from his body than fail to take Brohadas back to his own country. And so the Turks renewed their onslaught.

351

Corbaran was so upset that he was almost beside himself when he saw Brohadas sprawled dead on the path, the noble young man whom he had held so dear. He shouted his warcry to rally his troops. More than 60,000 with their bows of horn made their way to the battle to avenge Brohadas. There was such fierce shooting and thrusting with lances that our noble knights fell back. Corbaran went and embraced the body where it lay on the ground. He lifted it hastily onto the neck of his charger and carried it out of the fray, not wanting to leave it there. He commanded his Turks to dress [the body] very richly. They stripped the corpse completely of its clothes then washed it and cleaned it thoroughly. They wrapped it tightly in a fine white patterned cloth, then laid it on a bier to be carried high up, covered with a valuable shroud. Four strong and agile warhorses bore it away.⁵²⁸ Corbaran turned back to rally his troops.

352

The battle was fierce and combat raged. The excellent knight Enguerrand of St-Pol and Lord Hugh his father were right in the thick of it; that day they killed a large number of wicked Saracens. Imagine Amedelis spurring his way through the fray. As he saw dead Persians, rich emirs who had given him furs and ermines, lands and fiefs and castles they had seized, anguish grew in his heart until he was nearly bursting with rage. He looked Corbaran squarely in the face. 'Alas, Lord Corbaran, you have made an appalling mess of things. You refused to heed the advice you were given, to let twenty or ten men fight it out for you. Now your

⁵²⁸ For burial customs see J. Frappier, 'La douleur et la mort dans la littérature française des XII^e et XIII^e siècles', in *Convegno del Centro di Studi sulla Spiritualità Medievale V: Il dolore e la morte nella spiritualità dei secoli XII e XIII, 7–10 October 1962* (Todi, 1962), pp. 67–110. For rich burial shrouds see the funerary cloth of Otho of Grandon from thirteenth-century Cyprus preserved in the Historisches Museum at Berne, elaborately embroidered with angels and Otho kneeling to the Virgin and Child.

troops are defeated and in disarray. You, meanwhile, will spend the rest of your life in shame and contempt. Now let me show you just how much I remain your friend.' He spurred the warhorse forward, brandishing his spear, and, making for William (a noble knight from Senlis) landed a blow on his dark-coloured shield. He shattered it with a direct hit on the boss, ripped and tore the mail hauberk, and sliced open his heart in his chest, knocking William dead from his horse into the undergrowth. Then he roared his wacry, wheeled round and rode back.

353

Battle raged on both sides. The Turks with their bows of horn cut through the press, but our Christians from the blessed land defended themselves stoutly against the infidels. Picture the King of the Tafurs along with his rank and file: they had neither hauberks nor helmets, nor shields hung round their necks. They flung themselves straight into the thick of the battle, raining down blows with stones and maces, razor-sharp knives and tempered axe-blades. They sliced off numerous pagan heads; anyone who could not do this attacked with stones that came to hand. They were a daunting sight, their hair standing on end, running towards their enemies teeth bared, so that anyone who saw them thought he was going to be their next meal. The wicked infidels were taking heavy punishment. Lord Peter the Hermit with his white beard was exerting every muscle laying about the Turks; anyone he struck was knocked to the ground by his sturdy iron-tipped staff and he was sweating profusely. The women were raining sharp stones on them and making sure that those tormented by thirst had water to drink. But with the main force of the Turks spurring towards them, our people are in danger of being thrown into disarray and defeated, if God who ascended into a cloud is not mindful of their plight. The bishop of Le Puy heard the commotion and cried at the top of his voice: 'Blessed Mary, come to our aid! God, turn your limpid gaze towards our people who have suffered so much and so painfully for you!'

354

The bishop of Le Puy went spurring through the fray. His company contained many valiant knights. He also had with him a number of the troops attached to the pugnacious Count Raymond of St-Gilles, though I am not sure how many: Raymond, to his chagrin, was guarding the city. The bishop sat, armed, on a grey warhorse. In his hand he held the Lance with which the wicked villains killed Lord God as He hung on the Cross. He made his way through the battle encouraging our men. 'My lords and noble knights, don't lose heart. Do not go in fear of death: on the contrary go and seek it out. Remember God and His holy command. He willingly humbled Himself and suffered death for our sake. Anyone who will die for Him defending His body will, I believe, be rewarded by going with Him to His

eternal kingdom. All the sins you have committed ever since the day of your birth will be forgiven you from that day forwards.' Once [the Christians] had heard this, mighty and least alike, not one was such a coward as not to ask for a fight. The Saracens and Persians would pay the price for this. In a very short space of time more of them were killed than any *jongleur* could possibly set out in his song.

355

The battle was quite unusually bloody. All the princes competed as to who could strike the most ferociously: Count Hugh of Vermandois, brother of King Philip; Dreux of Nesle on his Gascon charger; Count Rainald, an extremely noble man, was striking blows; Clarendon of Vendueil, Anselm of Ribemont, and the handsome Achard of Montmerle; Count Raimbald of Orange; Louis of Mosson; Steven of Albemarle, the son of Duke Otto; and Gerard of Gournay also laced on his pennant; Rainald of Beauvais and Matthew of Clermont; Gerard of Cérisy with the valiant Walo; both Walter of Domedart and his companions, and Thomas of La Fère slashing about viciously; Lord Hugh of St-Pol of the noble heart, and his son Enguerrand of St-Pol of unimpeachable integrity; Robert count of Flanders known as the Frisian; Eustace of Boulogne, brother of the duke of Bouillon, and Baldwin of Mons who carried a crimson pennant; Hernald the Lorrainer and Hugh of Dijon; Count Lambert of Liège, who had no truck with treachery and who gave no quarter to anyone he attacked; Count Rotrou of Perche who nursed a fierce hatred for the villainous followers of Mohammed; Geoffrey of Las Tours, who fought so skilfully that medical help would be wasted on anyone he took on; Fulcher the orphan along with Rainald Creton, Payen of Camel, and Gerard of the Donjon, and Roger of Rosoie who limped; Tancred of Sicily with Duke Bohemond; the bishop of Le Puy who preached their sermons; Duke Godfrey the lion-hearted and his valiant companion Wicher the Swabian; the duke of Normandy and Fulcher of Alençon; the squire William who took deadly revenge for Eudes of Beauvais, Hugh's seneschal;⁵²⁹ all the soldiers from Denmark, Lorrains and Frisians – spurting forward as fast as their horses would go, all these flung themselves ferociously on the Turks. Each man knocked his target flying with sharp spear; they inflicted such slaughter with their sharp swords that blood and brains were left lying on the sandy ground.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁹ This refers back to Odo's death in *laisse* 339.

⁵³⁰ Gruesome but formulaic. Compare *Guillaume*, vv. 920–21, 'Fert en la teste le vaillant chevalier/Que la cervelle sur l'erbe li chet' ('He strikes the valiant knight on the head so that his brains spill on the grass', trans. Bennett).

356

It was a massive and very bloody battle. Corbaran struck and struck again alongside all his companions. There were 50 kings not including the other leaders: the author of the song – Richard the Pilgrim, from whom we have it – knew the names very well.⁵³¹ There was Brudalans, Rodamus and Grandons; Elyas and Cleremes; Brumans and Derions; the emir Gramarmes; Braimans and Faraons, and Judas Maccabeus, Tenebrois and Samson; Antiochus the Red, David and Solomon; Herod and Pilate; Gaifiers and Lucions; Claras of Sarmazane, Corbas and Lirions; Dinemors and Mallars; Tiason, Firmions, Arbulans, Lamusars, Aloris, Guenedons, Madonies of Oliandre, and King Lorions.⁵³² With them were Sansadoine, Soliman and Noiron, the noble Amedelis and Red Lion.

357

The battle was massive, tough and hard fought. Our troops from the blessed land fought well. The valiant count of Normandy spurred on his fine warhorse, yelling his warcry. He struck Red Lion on his round shield, smashing and piercing it round the boss, ripping open his mailed hood and slicing into his body, thrusting the lance clean through his chest. He sent him tumbling dead from his horse, and his soul left his body to inhabit the hideous shades of Hell. The good duke of Bouillon then slashed Soliman with his sharp sword, cutting off his head. Lord Hugh of Vermandois, who had been carrying the standard, followed Sansadoine right into a valley and gave him such a blow with the sword he carried that he sliced through him right down to the heart.⁵³³ At this sight the Saracens raised such a commotion that the earth rang with it for a league around. You might have seen numerous Turks converging on the battle; innumerable arrows with flights of gold thread shot, and innumerable noble women knocked from their horses sprawled dead and bleeding on the ground.⁵³⁴ [The Saracens] killed and wounded many of our good

⁵³¹ This is the sole reference to Richard le Pèlerin on which vast and tottering edifices of speculation have been built. See Introduction, chapter 1.

⁵³² Thirty-three are actually listed. The names are a blend of fantasy (Claris and Derions), abuse (Tenebrois) and the Bible (cameo appearances by Herod and Pilate amongst others): see Bancourt, *Musulmans*, vol. 1, pp. 32–52. Compare AA's 9 names mixing real and fabulous (pp. 258–61); FC has only 3 names in the final redaction, but in the first had 'about thirty other leaders mentioned in garbled form' (p. 104, n. 3). These are reminiscent of the list of kings of Antioch in PT, which has 75 names (pp. 97–8); Hill and Hill suggest that the endings of PT's names suggest their occurrence in verse (p. 97, n. 26). Laisses 355 and 356 contrast the two forces.

⁵³³ Three of the main Saracens in the poem are dispatched in less than ten lines.

⁵³⁴ Presumably the squadron of crusader women who sallied forth out with the army, although nothing was said about them being on horseback.

troops. If Almighty God does not spare them a thought, our people are in grave danger of being defeated and slaughtered.

358

The battle was wide-ranging and fiercely fought, with the devil's race raining down a hail of blows. They cut and hacked our men about so much that they began to think they could reduce them to nothing. As you can imagine our men became seriously demoralised at the turn events were taking. At this point the bishop of Le Puy, whom God loved and held dear, looked up an old path leading to the mountains. There he saw a company riding proudly down, so great that nobody could fail to be impressed. I am sure it must have amounted to more than half a million. They were whiter than the snow that falls at the end of February. St George was out in front at its head with the noble St Maurice, renowned as a stout warrior, and St Demetrius and St Mercurius as standard-bearers.⁵³⁵ If our people had not had Jesus on their side, they would have been so terrified when they saw the lances lowered for the charge that they would have lost all discipline beyond hope of recovery. As it was, the bishop of Le Puy restored order: 'My lords, there is nothing to be afraid of. These forces are coming to help us. They are the angels sent by God which I told you of yesterday.' When the Turks saw [the reinforcements], they were flung into confusion. One thousand pounds of pure gold would not have sufficed to keep them there. Every single one swung his swift charger round, not minding where he headed as long as he could save his life. Our men pursued them, determined to give no quarter. They abandoned any horses that had become tired, finding enough roaming outside the city whose riders lay dead on the grass of the battlefield. My lords, now listen to [an exploit of] the noble vassal Wicher.⁵³⁶ When he saw the pagans fleeing and the Franks in hot pursuit, the standard billowing out in the wind, he begged God the Judge of all to allow him victory and plunder that day. He headed straight for the press of battle; anyone he attacked had no use for a doctor. However, the arrogant Turks (God make them suffer!) killed his good swift horse beneath him. The noble [Wicher] held his quartered shield in front of him, gripping his steel-bladed sword in his hand. Anyone who saw him slaughtering Saracens, sending them sprawling dead on the ground one on top of another, would have had no need to invoke the memory of Roland and Oliver. The Turks did not dare to come any nearer to him than the length of a footsoldier's spear. No matter what they shot and flung and hurled at him, he fought through to the standard without stopping, unfazed by lance blows and crossbow shots. He cut the flagpole so that it came tumbling down. The foul wretches were on the point of

⁵³⁵ The white forces foretold by the bishop of Le Puy earlier; *laisse* 358 specifies that they are angels. See Introduction, chapter 2.

⁵³⁶ This is not in RM, and interestingly the start of the episode is marked by an oral formula.

killing him when the Germans and Bavarians, French and Lorrainers, Normans and men of Poix came charging to the rescue. Picture the cut and thrust of the swords. The Turks were unable to withstand the full force of battle and turned and fled with no intention of coming back. Corbaran nearly burst with rage when he saw this.

359

Corbaran saw his men turning in flight, suffering injury and death from the Frankish swords. When he saw his standard toppled to the ground he was so upset that he was virtually beside himself. He began to invoke Mohammed at the top of his voice: 'Alas, lord Mohammed! I have always loved you and served and honoured you with all my might. If I ever get back to my own land, I shall have you burned and the ash cast to the winds, or I shall have you trampled underfoot by horses.' He had a fire started in the tall grass: it was stiff and dry and burst into flames, which hurt our people very badly as they tried to get through.⁵³⁷ When [the Saracens] in the tents saw the fire lit they took it as a sign to remove their treasure and carry it away. The Syrians and Armenians came round in front of them, stripped them of all they had, then cut their heads off. Now you will hear about the shameful defeat meted out to the pagans. No tongue can tell and no heart imagine just what the nobles from overseas accomplished that day. I cannot tell you about every single person's exploits, but I do not want to forget the duke of Bouillon, or Wicher the Swabian who achieved so many praiseworthy feats, or Count Robert responsible for Flanders, Count Hugh of Vermandois and the noble Bohemond, and the handsome Robert of Normandy. All of them rampaged through the battle like wild boars. They went to find the pagans between the river and the mountains, attacking them with their steel swords and ensuring they would never return to their quarters again.

360

So the pagans were fleeing, furious and miserable, now closely followed by our good soldiers constantly raining blows on them. Had you been there you would have seen innumerable pagans lying dead; huge quantities of blood flowed from their bodies and the streams down from the mountains ran with it. There was a large wide valley near a ravine which was where the cowardly infidels decided to turn round. Imagine Gerard of Melun spurring up at top speed; his hair was iron grey. He had been lying ill for a considerable time before. He flung himself into the press of battle. In my opinion that was a juvenile way to act: the cowardly infidels

⁵³⁷ The *Antioche* is the only text to make the obvious point that a fire in dry grass was dangerous; typical of the pragmatic approach of the author(s).

dispatched him in short order.⁵³⁸ Now let me describe to you Everard of Le Puiset spurring up, a very brave warrior. With him were Dreux [of Nesle?], Clarembaut [of Vendueil], the valiant Thomas [of Marle] and Payan of Beauvais on a swift horse. They were very upset when they saw Gerard lying dead, and desperate to avenge their friend. The noble warriors entered the press of battle, each inflicting such deadly blows with razor-sharp sword that anyone on the receiving end was stopped in his tracks. The forces of Our Lord grew by the minute; the arrogant Turkish forces dwindled alarmingly. They turned tail and fled in retreat, heading straight for the Iron Bridge across the Orontes to save themselves.

361

When Dreux [of Nesle?] and Clarembaut of Vendueil and Payan of Beauvais and their companion Thomas (who hailed from Auxois) and Everard of Le Puiset saw the pathetic dogs who had killed their friend Gerard, they were furious. As they saw the blood streaming from his body, they said to each other: 'Gentlemen, what shall we do? Failing to avenge him right now would be a stain on our character.' They spurred on their chargers and drew their swords. Anyone they attacked was immediately sent to perfect peace. It was a massive battle with terrible wounds inflicted. So much blood streamed from the infidels that it stained the chests and legs of the horses. The Turks were thrown into disarray. They would not be back. They fled straight towards the Iron Bridge over the Orontes at a gallop.

362

So Corbaran fled, griefstricken and in the depths of misery. The men he had brought were overcome. Such a cloud of dust rose from the swift horses that what had been a clear sky was lost to view.⁵³⁹ They headed straight for the Iron Bridge over the Orontes. Our people, their deadly enemies, pursued them all the way to the castle that was held by the noble Tancred. My God! They killed and wounded so many that day. At length day faded. You can picture how the remainder escaped. Our men returned to their quarters and tents. However, the duke of Bouillon swept past them all in hot pursuit on his armoured horse, accompanied by a large part of his household. He chased Corbaran, who had fled in terror, into an extremely large valley.⁵⁴⁰ 'You coward! You will not save your skin here!' he shouted at the

⁵³⁸ The episode is in RM, who also comments that Gerard's actions were stupid (pp. 172–3).

⁵³⁹ A nice piece of ring composition: Corbaran's forces in *laisse* 268 were first seen emerging from a cloud of dust.

⁵⁴⁰ Fittingly the final showdown is between Godfrey and Corbaran, the leading characters of their respective sides. This is not in RM but provides a dramatic climax.

top of his voice. When Corbaran heard this he looked at them and shouted back loudly: 'Act as noble knights! In my opinion those men pursuing us are complete idiots.' By now night had come and the last glimmers of day disappeared. A hard-fought battle was fought on that spot. Things went against our men and the duke found himself with none of his companions left. It was there that the daring squire Wicher found his death: Claras of Sarmazane tore his hauberk and pierced his side with two feathered darts. The knight fell to the ground, mortally wounded.⁵⁴¹ He invoked the Holy Majesty of God. 'Glorious Lord and Father who was hanged on the Cross, have mercy on my soul: it is all over with my mortal body. Help the duke to avoid harm, because I can no longer help him out of trouble.' With these words he expired. The good duke of Bouillon was hemmed in so tightly that he could not have retreated even for 1000 weighed marks of gold. His swift horse was killed beneath him, leaving him on foot raging with anger. He set his back against a large rock, his gold-bordered shield in front of him. He came under heavy pressure from the [Saracen] wretches.

363

No need to ask whether the duke was sorry to see his charger knocked dead beneath him and Wicher the Swabian, whom he held in great affection, lying dead on the ground trampled by warhorses! He was so upset as to be almost beside himself. He held his shield (which he had had bordered in gold) in front of him, his sword with its shining steel blade in his hand, defending himself like a wild boar. Anyone who could have seen the prince dismembering Saracens and sending one on top of another somersaulting dead to the ground would have had no need to invoke the memory of Bertrand [of Orange] or Aimeri [of Narbonne].⁵⁴² When Corbaran saw how valiantly he was conducting himself, he began to shout out in a loud voice: 'Sir, what is your name? Don't stay anonymous.'

'I shall tell you exactly who I am, vassal,' said the duke. 'I am known as Godfrey of Bouillon.'

'In faith,' said Corbaran, 'I have heard you much praised. If you yield yourself unharmed, I shall have you led away to be presented to my lord the sultan. And if you were to choose to apostasise I should willingly heap riches and treasures on you.'

⁵⁴¹ According to AA he in fact died of illness during Baldwin I's reign (pp. 584–5). However his death here heightens the tension of Godfrey's situation and is arguably more heroic than his real death.

⁵⁴² Bertrand is the grandson of Aimeri de Narbonne and nephew of Guillaume d'Orange (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 242–3). Aimeri probably refers to Aimeri de Narbonne, a key figure in the *Guillaume* cycle, grandson of Garin de Monglane and father of Guillaume d'Orange (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 123–4).

‘I am not interested in anything you say, vassal,’ said the duke. ‘Just come over here and fight me. If you can take me alive, you will have plenty you can boast about. Conversely if I remain in one piece, you will find plenty to worry about! I shall conquer all the way to the kingdom of Persia, leaving no settlement, no town and no tower intact. I shall throw your emir the sultan into prison and gouge his eyes out of his head one after the other with an outsize nail. I shall come back by way of Mohammed’s shrine in Mecca to take away the two candelabrae so I can put them in front of the Holy Sepulchre.’⁵⁴³ Corbaran thought he would go berserk when he heard this. So he commanded his men: ‘Whatever you do, do not let him escape!’ At this you might have heard the Turks yelping and shouting, flinging themselves in a mass attack on the good duke of Bouillon. If God the salvation of all does not remember him, the duke will find he has breathed his last: the wicked pagans (God bring shame on them!) pressed him so hard that they knocked him over. He leapt up so vigorously in his efforts to escape death that blood spurted out from his navel. He seized his shield and his shining steel sword, defending himself against the Turks for dear life. Meanwhile our good people from the kingdom overseas could find neither hide nor hair of the duke of Bouillon when they retired to their tents to rest themselves. Just as they were about to sit down to supper, picture [the arrival of] a messenger. ‘My lords,’ he said to the princes, ‘please listen to me. I saw the good duke of Bouillon on his way over a high mountain. He is dead or captured: either way he has not returned.’ Our leaders burst into tears when they heard this. They did not hang about but mounted instantly, spurring away from the tents and planning what they would do. May the Lord who is the Salvation of all guide them!

364

Our barons spurred ahead at speed, preoccupied and in a state of some consternation. Each one swore: ‘If we cannot get him back, we shall follow after him all the way to the kingdom of Persia.’ The duke had his back to the rock, his brass-hilted sword in his hand; grasping his shield like a champion and defending himself there like a lion. Anyone he struck with his sword sought no ransom: he would send the head flying onto the sandy ground in front of him. But there were Turks in abundance, hordes of them. They shot him with their Turkish bows and kicked up an almighty din. If God, who suffered the Passion, does not spare him a thought now, terrible pain and loss will be the result. By now the duke was wounded in the liver and lungs. He was frightened he would die, shivering all over at the prospect. He began a prayer to Our Lord: ‘Glorious Lord God, you brought back the body of St Lazarus from the dead with your blessing. The beautiful Mary Magdalen came so close to you in the house of Simon that she came and sat at your feet on a low

⁵⁴³ Godfrey threatens the sultan of Persia in the same terms in the *Jérusalem*, vv. 6794–801.

couch; she poured out so many tears from the depth of her heart that she washed your feet with them all over, then anointed them with balm in the goodness of her heart. That was a very wise thing to do and she was well rewarded: you pardoned her all her sins. Lord, just as this is true – as we sincerely believe – just so please save my body from death and captivity and help me to avoid being overwhelmed by these wicked Saracens.⁵⁴⁴

365

The good duke of Bouillon came to the end of his prayer. He confessed his sins to Our Lord. His shield in front of him and sword in hand, he defended himself ferociously against the pagan forces. Meanwhile our good men from the blessed land had ridden far enough to be able to hear the noise of the pagan forces down in the valley. At this you might have heard them yelling, 'Montjoie!' They spurred their horses and galloped forward proudly. Each struck his target with sharp lance. The battle was wide-ranging and densely fought. Claras de Sarmazane had his head cut off; Brudalans and Herod were left on the field with more than 400 of their countrymen. The Turkish company was routed. The good and well-respected duke was rescued. Lifting him onto the gilded saddle of a charger, they returned to their quarters and celebrated enthusiastically. The bishop [of Le Puy] gave a rousing homily before he took off his hauberck.

366

Our men dismounted at their lodgings and tents. They unlaced their helmets and took off their hauberks. Before the bishop of Le Puy disarmed, however, he preached an excellent sermon. 'My lords,' he said, 'listen to me for a moment. Nobody has seen so many knights of such quality assembled ever since the world was created. Anyone who has seen what you have achieved today must be a true friend and companion of God. You have killed and defeated all the Turks. Be sure not to make Jesus in His glory or His celestial hierarchies weep. For love of Him I implore you to avoid laughing and to hold back from telling any lies.'⁵⁴⁵ They replied: 'Your reverence, we shall do as you command.' That night they rested in comfortable tents; each of them was exhausted by what he had been through. This is not a tall tale and you deny it at your peril – the written source attests it and it is

⁵⁴⁴ A shortened version of the *prière du plus grand péril* uttered by *chanson de geste* heroes at desperate moments. See Introduction, chapter 3.

⁵⁴⁵ This sermon evidently puzzled medieval scribes: mss B, C, G and T all have different readings. The odd-sounding prohibition on laughter may evoke the traditional ecclesiastical position that laughter in church was unbecoming; see E.R. Curtius, *European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W.R. Trask (London, 1953), pp. 420–22.

true – that day they killed 100,000 knights.⁵⁴⁶ As for the footsoldiers, there were so many that nobody will ever be able to give the number; that is what our masters tell us and it is true.

367⁵⁴⁷

That night our men rested in their tents; they were physically exhausted by everything they had been through. Now listen to what the Saracens had done, the fools: they had put their supper on at daybreak, not thinking our men would ever be brave enough for even one man to come out of the city and take them on.⁵⁴⁸ But God in his bounty came to the aid of the Christians. Now that the Saracens were dead, captured and shamed, our men had plenty to eat and drink. That night they took their ease in luxury until they rose the following morning. Then they gathered up and assembled their plunder. They had taken 500,000 camels; enough mules and warhorses that they could not be counted; and they brought in so many other animals that they could not have counted them by hundreds or thousands. They went back into the city with all their spoils. The abbots, monks and ordained priests came out to meet them with the Cross and relics, giving heartfelt thanks and praise to God; you could not have grown as much corn in four years as they carried into the fine city. Those who previously had virtually nothing now had gold and abundant possessions.

368

Garsion of Antioch was leaning on the walls, from where he saw his men killed, slaughtered and mutilated. Our Christian Franks pursued them vigorously on their faithful chargers, lances raised; even if they fled for all they were worth they stood no chance of escape. He saw their standard ripped to pieces and the golden ball on top flung down. He was so grieved at this as to be nearly beside himself. He fainted away more than twice on the elaborately worked marble [floor]. If you ask me, he would have gone completely insane had he not had his barons there to pick him up. ‘Come on, Lord Garsion. Why are you so devastated? Go to Coroscane to seek help.’

‘My lords,’ said Garsion, ‘listen and give me your attention. You are all my men. You hold your fiefs from me. As you well know it was I who conquered this

⁵⁴⁶ This source is RM, pp. 172–3.

⁵⁴⁷ At this point ms D (Nelson’s base ms B), diverges completely from ms A, giving an alternative version of the end of the story.

⁵⁴⁸ The original idea for this is in RM, who says the Saracens had prepared but not cooked the food (pp. 172–3). The *Antioche*’s version is more dramatic but less realistic. Possibly there is an implication that the Saracens were arrogantly assuming victory.

territory. But the Franks are taking it away from me. That makes me all the more upset. You are to keep watch over this citadel for me with the eyes in your heads. Tonight I shall arm myself and leave at top speed, taking with me neither sergeants or squires. I shall make for Coroscane to seek help, be assured. If I can find the valiant sultan of Persia, we shall bring [the Christians] to grief in no time. Those greedy-guts wretches will rue the day they entered our territory.'

'My lord,' said his men, 'take your leave.'⁵⁴⁹

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They waited for day to fade and night to come. Then the king mounted his charger, fully armed. His men, who were extremely brave, led the way. He left one of the postern gates on foot. You can imagine how upset his men were as he took his leave: they wrung their hands and tore their hair out by the roots. The king rode away in proud anger; he spent the whole night bent over his horse's neck mulling things over. Reaching a spring beneath an olive tree, he turned his horse to let it drink.

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Listen to what God brought about. As [Garsion] turned his swift horse about, a Syrian came running up at speed and swept off his head with a large billhook! Then he seized it by the beard and the hair on the head and made his way straight back to Antioch. He came to a space swarming with knights, but decided not to exhibit the noble king's head until he knew what his reward would be. The Armenian sidled up to some Greeks and muttered to them surreptitiously: 'By Heaven! You will never guess what God has brought about. Garsion is dead – yes, really – I don't know whether it was today or yesterday. But his head might be produced for inspection if the reward was high enough.' They gave thanks to Lord God, glorious in the heavens. Some men and knights of Bohemond's turned up there to make some purchases and overheard the advice the Greeks were giving the Armenian. Without so much as a by your leave they seized the bearer of the head by the arms and would not release him, dragging him to their overlord Bohemond.

⁵⁴⁹ There is confusion about the death of Garsion. In ms D he converts rather than dies; in ms E he refuses to convert and is killed; both of these, as well as L, confuse him with the emir in charge in the citadel (and it is not obvious where he has been all this time in A). Laisse 274 of the *Antioche* also seems to refer to a different version where Garsion died when Antioch fell rather than now. The version of Garsion's flight and death in ms A is very close to that in AA who, however, puts it at the fall of Antioch rather than now (pp. 286–7).

⁵⁵⁰ This is the only laisse in ms A to be assonanced rather than rhymed. There are no other obvious differences of content or language. See Introduction, chapter 3.

‘My lord, these men claim (they can all speak our language) that Garsion is dead: it is not clear whether today or yesterday.’

‘They are all lying to mislead us,’ replied the duke. ‘No we are not, honestly,’ replied the Syrians. ‘But what sort of reward might there be for anyone who could display the head?’

‘I shall make a straight offer,’ replied Bohemond: ‘I shall give one hundred bezants from my finest gold to the man who has it, and in addition he will enjoy my friendship.’ The peasant was overjoyed when he heard this. He went to the place where he had hidden it and came back, clutching it by the beard (which was more than an ell and a quarter long). He came straight up to Bohemond and handed the head over. The duke was absolutely delighted. He held his hands up to the sky and gave thanks to God: so did his knights. He saw the beard matted with blood and the bloodstained face, the hairy ears and grimacing teeth. My God! Just imagine how happy he would have been had [Garsion] been taken alive!⁵⁵¹ He made his way to the foot of the citadel with his interpreter and began to shout to those up in the tower: ‘The game is up! Hand over this citadel, you wicked guzzling liars! You placed your hopes in Garsion. Well, he is dead!’ Those up in the tower replied, ‘No he isn’t, on my head. You can lie all you like, but it is not worth as much as a denier. Yesterday evening he got on a charger at midnight to go and tell the emir of Persia all about you. Within a month you will see him back here. He is on his way to Coroscane to get help. Throughout the entire expanse of that brave country there will not be one Saracen or pagan left who is capable of bearing arms on horseback or foot: they are coming to get you before you get back to France.’

‘My lords,’ said Bohemond, ‘nothing could be further from the truth. Send ten of your knights down. I give you my word in the name of my Lord who is in the heavens, the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary and object of our prayers, that you will not need a guard and nobody will attack you. When you hear what I have to tell you, you will have to believe it.’ So the noble Saracens came down, swords strapped on and spears in hand. They marched out of the gate tightly ranked in good order. He showed them the head. They were appalled. ‘My lords,’ said Bohemond, ‘this is your only option. Surrender this citadel to me and you will be well rewarded. I shall give you 100 mules and as many warhorses. All of you who are knights will be given unlimited arms and reward. Anyone who remains can keep his fief free of all claim, not losing even a *denier* because of my actions, and I shall bind myself by oath on this. Anyone who wants to go has my leave to do so [and take] my letters under seal to Coroscane: he need not fear any man on earth.’ They replied to his offer: ‘As you are giving us leave to go, we shall carry your message with us.’

⁵⁵¹ This episode is also in AA, p. 287. The poet seems to have forgotten that Garsion shaved off his beard at *laissez* 192–3. Also, AA is clear that the peasants were Syrians, while the *Antioche* calls them both Syrians and Armenians within a few lines.

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They all went back up into the main citadel and told everyone in the tower that the king was lost and they had seen his head severed from his body. They retailed all the terms Bohemond had offered. This threw the Saracens into total consternation. Princes and dukes alike were griefstricken.⁵⁵² There was a particular admiral of high prestige who was lord over the rest and held power. He had watched very carefully how the battle had developed, and how as soon as the knights who were as white as meadow flowers had joined with our men his own side had been defeated and killed.⁵⁵³ He sent to Our Lord's army for a banner. Lord Raymond of St-Gilles sent him his own, which he fixed on the highest tower. However, the Lombards and Apulians pointed out to him, accurately, that it was not the pennant belonging to the illustrious Bohemond. So he tore it down again as soon as possible and had a messenger whom he could trust with private business summoned. 'My friend, I beg you in the name of friendship to leave here and go straight to the famous good duke Bohemond. Tell him to come and talk to me as soon as you have given him this message.'

'My lord, I obey without question.' The messenger turned and left immediately. Making his way to the Franks to whom God had shown his love, he asked for Bohemond. They pointed him out. The messenger came before him and greeted him in God's name. Bohemond, shrewd as ever, replied: 'May it be God's will to save you, my friend.'

'My lord, the emir is very keen to see you. He would like a private interview with you in secret.'

'My friend,' replied Bohemond, 'as you see I am ready to come immediately.' He leapt straight away onto his swift horse and went up the mountain at rather more than walking pace, not drawing rein until he had reached the main gate. When the emir saw him he called out to him.⁵⁵⁴

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The emir called to the marquis Bohemond: 'Welcome Bohemond, my noble friend!'

'My lord, may you fare well,' replied Bohemond.

'Listen to what I have to say, Bohemond. I have Persians and Arabs here with me. They are strong and proud, and some are outstanding. I want to be absolutely sure beyond any shadow of doubt that those who wish to return to their far-off

⁵⁵² The text returns to RM (p. 174).

⁵⁵³ The role of the white forces is underlined through acknowledgement by the Saracen opponents. The reference is from RM (pp. 174–5); the celestial help is described in *laisse* 358.

⁵⁵⁴ Hardly a secret interview, then.

homeland should have a safe conduct and not be attacked, taking palfreys and packhorses with them. Any who decide to believe in God and His Resurrection should be baptised in your holy font, and they will serve God the King of Paradise for ever more. [On those terms] I shall surrender to you the tower and the vaulted palace.' Bohemond was delighted at hearing this. He responded courteously as any sensible man would: 'My lord, please do not worry and take it amiss if I go and seek the views of my brave barons. I shall come back to you as soon as I possibly can.' The emir was content and willingly granted his request. Bohemond took his leave and returned [to his own side]. He rode straight back to our Franks without drawing rein; he saluted them in the name of Jesus, King of Paradise, begging Him to give them His strength against their enemies.

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Bohemond went back on his Aragonese warhorse. Reaching his nobly born barons, he addressed them courteously in his own language: 'My lords, the emir up in the citadel sends word to you by me – asking me to act as his messenger – that he has with him a company of very noble Turks. [He asks that] those of them who depart should be given safe passage along with all their possessions, suffering no loss. Those who decide to renounce their own cruel religion should be baptised: they will do you homage and serve you as long as they live. He will surrender to me the tower and highest platform. In my opinion there is no stronger [fortification] between here and Carthage.'

'My lord,' said his barons, 'these terms leave nothing to be desired. Anyone who refused them would be a total madman. May God who created the birds that fly and who became flesh in the darkness of the Virgin[’s womb] come to the army’s aid!'

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When Bohemond heard the reaction of his barons – they liked the offer and all agreed to it – he immediately went back without delay to the main tower, not drawing rein. He shouted a sensible acceptance up to the emir. 'My lord, our barons are content with the terms you have offered me. We accept.' He swore on his religion as a guarantee of his words. Then the door was opened and the people led out. Any who wanted to return to their own land were given safe conduct, not losing as much as a pennyworth. Those who decided to believe in our faith were baptised by ordained clerics then and there. Our honoured people celebrated joyfully. At this point the emir told them something. 'Gentlemen, as I watched the battle on the field yesterday, I saw an armed company come down from heaven. It was so extensive and numerous that it was impossible to count the number; and it was whiter than snow lying on frost. The moment it joined in with your troops,

our men were defeated, killed and completely routed. The whole earth shook, mountain and valley: indeed our tower up there almost collapsed. It is true to say we were so afraid that every one of us would have preferred to be well beyond the Dead Sea'.

My lords, now the author who wrote these lines and crafted the rhymes wants to bring this account to an end until the next time it is reworked.⁵⁵⁵

The 'Twelve Couplets'⁵⁵⁶

Couplet 1

They handed the citadel over to Count Bohemond. He went up into the castle that was on top of the mountain and seized the keep, putting in his own garrison. The forces of Our Lord celebrated joyfully. However, this happiness was followed by very great sadness because the bishop of Le Puy lived only 15 more days: he became very ill and things weighed heavily on him. He had the noble leaders sent for to appear in front of him. I have heard the names of this assembly of princes given as follows: Adam, son of Michael; Tancred and Bohemond; Robert the Norman and the Frisian count;⁵⁵⁷ the noble-hearted Duke Godfrey; the count of St-Gilles and all his companions; and Lord Hugh of Vermandois, brother of King Philip. As soon as he could he addressed them: 'Listen, good Christians and noble knights. In the name of Jesus in glory, I make this pronouncement: you are the sons of Our Lord, and even if you numbered no more than 100, you would [still] take Jerusalem amid gladness and rejoicing. Now the time has come for me to depart. Let faith and charity continue to rule among you.' He raised his hand and blessed them all with the sign of the Cross. The soul of the noble lord left [his body], carried off by a great train of angels. No king, count or emperor's heir was ever honoured by such services as were held for the bishop that day, carried out by the monks, priests and abbots in attendance; they read psalms around him from the Psalter, prayed and read orisons, and commended the soul of the noble lord. The press around his body was so great that the shroud was ripped as the pilgrim army came to kiss his feet.⁵⁵⁸ An immense offering was collected that day reflecting the

⁵⁵⁵ These three lines both precede and follow the 'twelve couplets' but share a rhyme with *laisse* 374.

⁵⁵⁶ These form a linking passage between the *Antioche* and the *Chétifs* in mss A, B and C. D and E have only a different version of the first 45 lines. T has the first *laisse* and 14 lines of the second. They are not present at all in F, G and L. Unlike the main text they are assonanced and not rhymed. See introduction for further discussion.

⁵⁵⁷ The same mistake as in the main text: Robert the Frisian was father of Robert of Flanders.

⁵⁵⁸ See Asbridge, *First Crusade*, p. 292 for comment on over-enthusiastic crowds damaging relics: St Francis was to suffer the same.

recognition that he was a very saintly man who sustained the army of Our Lord God. As long as he lived nothing but good was heard of him. Now let us implore God in his most holy name to look after all those on their way to avenge Him.

Couplet 2

The servants of God carried the holy bishop away. Clerks, monks and priests put on their vestments; with crosses, reliquaries and wax candles,⁵⁵⁹ and bringing censers they went to say Mass. They buried the bishop beneath the main altar in the cathedral of St Peter in the city, using as grave the pit from which the Lance had been unearthed that dealt God his death blow in his martyrdom.⁵⁶⁰ Our Christian lords then took their departure.⁵⁶¹ Bohemond, having taken control of the citadel, stayed behind. Meanwhile Duke Godfrey left the city. Passing by the strong and wealthy castle of Ravenda,⁵⁶² he made his way to the well-fortified city of Edessa; when his brother saw him, he received him with great ceremony and provided generously for him and his entourage.⁵⁶³ Count Raymond made for Tamerlerie and besieged it with a strong force.⁵⁶⁴ A Turk armed himself and came out.

Couplet 3

During the siege, while they were foraging, a Turk armed himself and came out riding a horse with four white socks. A letter was fixed on the horn of the saddle in front of him. He rode out at such speed that he was right out in front. Lord Rainald of Beauvais took up his shield and launched a merciless attack on the Turk.⁵⁶⁵ He killed him with the force of his lance thrust and took his horse, leading it back to God's army. The Franks were delighted at his brave action. Rainald took the letter and had its contents read to him. It said that the bearer was from Mecca and was bringing his forces to joust with the Franks in battle.

⁵⁵⁹ As opposed to everyday tallow.

⁵⁶⁰ Obvious symbolism. Adhemar is also implicitly associated with St Peter.

⁵⁶¹ A long winter of in-fighting is glossed over. See Asbridge, *First Crusade*, chapters 8 and 9.

⁵⁶² Revanda kale (now in Turkey). According to AA Godfrey withdrew to Ravendel during the winter following the battle of Antioch because of a plague epidemic in the crusader camp (p.355).

⁵⁶³ Baldwin of Bouillon, who had gained the county of Edessa from its Armenian ruler by murky means.

⁵⁶⁴ AA's Talamaria: usually identified as Tell-Mannas (N. Syria), but this is uncertain (AA, p. 375, n.33).

⁵⁶⁵ It is not clear whether this is an envoy: if so killing him would infringe the rules of war. Corbaran did not kill the Christian emissaries. Rainald of Beauvais is found in Gilo, who places him in Hugh's *juventus* (pp. 190–3); he also appears in AA (pp.98–9, 134–5, 194–5, 322–3).

Couplet 4

The Franks took Albara and installed a good bishop.⁵⁶⁶ What matter if, having installed him, they did not leave any forces with him? At the time their forces were very thinly stretched and they did not have the help of Godfrey. They left Albara behind and, passing by La Liche, came to Ma'arrat where they went through a very uncomfortable time.⁵⁶⁷ It was five weeks before they could take the town. They were forced to live off donkeys and horses and other dumb animals, being very short of corn and flour; they even ate Turks, and some killed them [for that purpose]. One night Lord Raymond of St-Gilles went out foraging with his proud forces. They ranged through the mountains near the seashore, seeking with naked blades anything they might be able to eat. Let me tell you of the miracle Our Lord accomplished. Those of our Christians killed by the pagans were found to have blood-red crosses on their chests right above their hearts: that was the work of Our Lord, and bolstered their confidence.⁵⁶⁸

Couplet 5

The army of the Tafur King was undaunted. They carried neither lance nor sword with them, preferring well-honed billhooks and iron clubs. Their king carried a highly tempered scythe. There was no pagan in the entire region so well armed that the king could not slash him right down to the entrails if he attacked him with that razor-sharp scythe. He held his company together in rigid order. Their bags were lashed round their necks; their chests were bare and their stomachs uncovered, their calves burned and the soles of their feet in ribbons. They devastated whatever land they were in; that made them the most feared squadron of all.

Couplet 6

All the barons of the army came together to discuss how to get the siege engines they needed to take Ma'arrat. They went to the stronghold at Tamellerie and smashed its walls down in short order, using their siege engines so effectively that the town fell. Then they built an engine to ensure the fall of Ma'arrat. The carpenters built it and ensured it was well protected: the bands, ties and hinges

⁵⁶⁶ Al-bāra, N. Syria. RA has the fullest account of the city's capture by Raymond of Toulouse, and he gives the bishop's name, which was Peter of Narbonne (p. 73).

⁵⁶⁷ La Liche – not identified. Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man was the scene of a difficult siege where provisions were so short that the army resorted to cannibalism, according to all the major sources (*GF*, p. 80; *RM*, p. 186; *RC*, p. 116; *FC*, p. 112; *AA*, p. 375). RA refers to hunger but not cannibalism (p. 76). Here it is lightly passed over, and surprisingly the Tafurs are not mentioned.

⁵⁶⁸ An outward sign of martyrdom: RA describes this or a similar incident, where the corpses of killed foragers were found to have crosses on their right shoulders (p. 82).

were of iron; they nailed the gangways in place and ensured the platforms were fortified; then they covered it with clay so that the Turks could not set it on fire.

Couplet 7

William of Montpellier climbed up on top of the tower along with 100 heroic knights. They lined up their petraries to batter the wall, showering them with small stones like rain from the sky.⁵⁶⁹ The wall collapsed, breached in 100 places, allowing our noble knights to get through: the Saracens and pagans were unable to stop them.

Couplet 8

Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man was taken on a Saturday. On the Sunday that followed they fought a hard battle with the Persians and Turks who were in the town, in possession of the towers that they had fortified. They perpetrated such bloodshed inside the town that no man who sang of it could do it justice. They found abundant provision of bread, flour, oil and corn off which the Christians could live. But there were very many who did not help themselves to it. Those up in the towers defended themselves furiously against our men and inflicted a lot of damage with their petraries. They killed one of our men Anselm of Ribemont, who was a great loss to the army of God.⁵⁷⁰ The Franks attacked their mortal enemies and took the towers by force: no point laughing or crying about it. They made the pagans they found pay dearly, killing all of them viciously and painfully. Once they had taken the town our men rested. The Franks, our men who served the Lord, stayed there to celebrate Christmas with great festivity.

Couplet 9

All the leaders of the army came together to discuss in counsel and in the name of penitence. They told the pilgrims to bring wood and to build a fire to try the Lance

⁵⁶⁹ 'Perrieres' were one of the many forms of stone-throwing artillery. Terms are interchangeable and confusing, but petraries were probably among the larger weapons; they apparently scattered small stones rather like grapeshot. See France, *Western Warfare*, pp. 118–25.

⁵⁷⁰ Anselm of Ribemont's death at Arqah (not as here Ma'arrat) is recorded in many sources: *GF*, p. 85; *PT*, p. 109; *RM*, p. 192; *AA*, pp. 376–9, 386–7; *RA*, pp. 88–9; *FC*, p. 113; *RC*, pp. 124–5. We possess two letters by him written during the Crusade: see Hagenmeyer, *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, nos VIII (pp. 144–6) and XV (pp. 157–60). *RC* gives a detailed account of his vision of a lost crusader in a palace though does not say who the crusader was (p. 124).

in ordeal.⁵⁷¹ The cleric who had discovered the Lance entered the fire wearing a hair shirt and grasping the Lance. He addressed the Frankish forces in the name of Our Lord, in a voice which could be heard all over. 'My lords, such is my belief in God and His great power that I shall enter this fire holding the Lance.' A number of people went off to the woods to gather wood and also thorny bushes to get the fire going. Then they set fire to it. Flames roared up. They cleared a passage and the holy cleric entered.

Couplet 10

All the leaders of the army came together in council, agreeing to try by ordeal the Lance that had killed Our Lord, because there were large numbers who thought it was a fake. Clerics, monks and priests put on their vestments and pronounced a blessing on the fire that would be the instrument of judgement. They prayed to God, the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that if the cleric was in the right he should not perish in the flames. The Provençal cleric addressed them as follows:⁵⁷² 'Listen, noble lords and good Christians. I shall live no more than five days after this ordeal: that is what the apostle St Andrew has told me.' Barefoot and in his undershirt, he put on a hair shirt. Holding the Holy Lance, he unflinchingly walked into the fire in a display of great bravery. God was together with him – his body was not burnt and not a hair on his head was singed. The Franks saw him come out on the other side and were wildly elated. They ran up to meet him – and, my God, fell on him. They tore his hair and ripped his clothes, wanting to claim them as relics. Duke Rainald and the count of St-Gilles swept him away.⁵⁷³

Couplet 11

The ordeal was staged two days before Easter. Duke Godfrey left Edessa, telling his household: 'I am not staying here any longer. I would rather go back to the army of God and find out how they are getting on.' Passing by Ravandel and leaving it behind without stopping he [and his men] went up a mountain. As they came down [the other side] through cultivated fields, they met 300 Turks (may God bring disaster on them!), armed and on sorrel, piebald and bay horses. Without hesitation the duke shouted out his wacry. He and his men numbered only 25 (may gentle Jesus come to their aid!). Nevertheless seeing no other option they launched an attack on the Turks for better or worse. 'God, my true Father,' said the duke, 'what shall I do? I know full well that for 25 to fling themselves into

⁵⁷¹ The ordeal is widely reported, but not in *GF* or *RM*. See a very full account favouring the Lance's authenticity in *RA*, pp. 100–3, 108; a sceptical one in *FC*, pp. 100–101; and a downright hostile one in *RC*, pp. 126–7. *AA*'s account is brief and relatively impartial (p. 379). The *Antioche* accepts the Lance as genuine.

⁵⁷² Only ms A is specific that he was Occitan.

⁵⁷³ It is unclear what Rainald this is.

a fight with 300 is asking for trouble.’ Without further discussion they attacked the Turks. Neither shield nor hauberk nor equipment was enough to protect them, nor could necessity overturn imminent lurking death.⁵⁷⁴ Now listen to the miracle Our Lord wrought. The Turks turned tail, coming off the worse and leaving their arms and bay horses in the possession of our Frenchmen. The duke made his way to the army of God at Ma’arrat without delay. He was critical of what they had been doing, and upset at the loss of Anselm of Ribemont. Now picture a message sent from Jesus. ‘Duke Godfrey, lord, do not hang about here any longer. Please do not stop at any stronghold or town. The time has come of which God has spoken. His sons, whom He redeemed from death, will avenge Him. You will see Jerusalem: indeed, in short order it will be yours. You will serve in honour at the Holy Sepulchre if such be God’s will.’⁵⁷⁵

Couplet 12

Our numerous forces spent the night celebrating until the first streaks of dawn appeared the following day. Then they rounded up their pack animals and lashed on their provisions of bread and flour along with their tents and shelters. Amid rejoicing they arrived in front of Tripoli. The pagans inside armed themselves and rode out against our French forces.⁵⁷⁶ The governor of the town was a very brave and shrewd man. Finding an interpreter, he sent him to tell the army of God that he would give them tribute on condition they renounced all claims to his territory. He took 60 of the best horses in town and sent them to God’s army straight away, along with 20,000 bezants and ten silks from Greece. Our barons were overjoyed at the sight. The following day they rose as soon as dawn brightened and reached Jubayl; however, they did not stop there or at Arqa or Beirut, contenting themselves with receiving tribute. The army in God’s service did not stop at Tyre; they passed by Sidon without stopping; and they reached the river at Ramla as noble and wealthy men.⁵⁷⁷ Lord Gaston of Bearn was a noble knight. Taking 20 of the men he trusted most, he rode out in front of Ramla looking for a fight. [But] the city was empty: its people had fled. The noble gave thanks to God at the sight. He found a messenger and sent him to tell the army of God that the town and its citadel were open to him. When our men heard this, poor and rich alike throughout the host were delighted. They hastened to mount their horses and enter the city, where they found quarters. They also made the wise decision to instal a good bishop.

⁵⁷⁴ The meaning here is very unclear.

⁵⁷⁵ AA reports two visions that may be the origin of this: pp. 366–9 and 436–9. The text emphasises divine support for Godfrey.

⁵⁷⁶ Here unequivocally French rather than Frankish.

⁵⁷⁷ These places are in an odd order, maybe for the rhyme. Moreover, Ramla is not on any river (its name means ‘sandy’). Lydda, not far away, is on the river Ayyalon and the writer may have confused the two places, which were both taken by the crusaders in June, 1099. Notably, AA makes precisely the same mistake (p. 397 and n. 66).

My lords, now the author who wrote these lines and crafted the rhymes wants to bring this account to an end until the next time it is reworked.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁸ Implying that this is a reworking: see Introduction, chapter 1.

PART III

Appendices

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Appendix 1

The Alabama Edition of Manuscript B and other Manuscript Traditions

Introduction

As explained in the Introduction, there are three editions of the *Chanson d'Antioche*. We have translated Duparc-Quioc's edition of 1977, based on B.N. fr.12558 (manuscript A in both editions). Nelson's 2003 version is based on B.N. fr.786 (ms. B for Nelson, ms. D for Duparc-Quioc).

This appendix is principally designed to make our translation usable with the 2003 Alabama edition. We hope thereby both to assist readers unable to access the Duparc-Quioc edition, and to give those with access to both a flavour of how versions of a text can differ between manuscripts. We have translated all *laisses* in Nelson's edition that are not in Duparc-Quioc's, and a selection of other material. We have chosen not to do this for Paulin's Paris edition: his editing is so idiosyncratic that we cannot see this would add any value.

Both Nelson and Duparc-Quioc include passages from other versions of the text that were not found in their respective base manuscripts. We have translated the principal variants here to give an insight into the other manuscript traditions.

The differences between the two editions

Nelson's edition of B.N. fr.786 is some 2,000 lines longer than Duparc-Quioc's edition of B.N. fr.12558.¹ The additional material is of three kinds. Firstly, there are passages that tie the text into the wider Cycle. The main additions are *laisses* 45–47 on Ida and her three sons that look to the Chevalier au Cygne, recalled at *laisse* 116; and material on the 'chétifs' at *laisses* 23, 32 and 135–38. References in passing to the 'chétifs' are common, e.g. at *laisses* 194 and 202; *laisse* 61 recalls Civetot. Secondly, there are new episodes or different versions of episodes in manuscript A. The main ones are:

- a detailed account of the council of Clermont at *laisses* 36–42;
- Bohemond taking the cross at *laisse* 48;
- additional material on the bisected Saracen and battle in *laisse* 177;
- additional material on Raimbaut Creton at *laisse* 181;

¹ 11407 lines compared to 9582.

- additional material on Rainalt Porcet at laisses 185–6;
- the final laisse, 382.

Laisse 106 has the same content and rhyme as A, but different wording; laisse 110 has a different rhyme and wording. In addition there are numerous smaller episodes such as the message carried by Ector of Calorie at laisse 122, the exhortations of Robert of Flanders and Godfrey at the foot of the siege ladder at laisse 266, the purchase of a horse for Robert of Flanders at laisse 299, and an attack on the envoys to Corbaran at laisse 313.

Thirdly there are more general additions: the author seldom uses one word where several will do. As an example we have translated laisses 78–84, which the reader is invited to compare with laisses 68–74 of ms A. The author of B.N. fr.786 repeatedly adds details, generally insignificant: thus at laisses 199–200 the prayer is longer; laisses 201–2 give additional material on the barons; laisse 203 specifies that it was the head of Garsion’s nephew that was catapulted into Antioch. Sometimes this can be otiose: we do not really need to know at laisse 254 how the Saracens got up and had breakfast. He adds material to underpin the links in the text, such as prophecies of Saracen defeat at laisses 228 and 238. In particular he often adds lines at the end of a laisse that repeat preceding material or look forward to the next laisse: see for example laisses 239–43.

Very little of this additional material with the possible exception of the final laisse adds to our knowledge of the Crusade. There is no obvious source and it is likely by this stage to have come from the store of general knowledge and fiction about the Crusade.

The following table puts laisse numbers side by side to make it easy to navigate between the two and points out the main differences between the two texts.

Comparative table

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 1–14: prologue	Laisses 1–14: minor differences
Laisses 15–34 Peter the Hermit’s Crusade; the battle of Civetot and the captivity of the ‘chétifs’	Laisses 15–34: minor differences. Extra material on Baudouin of Beauvais in laisse 23; vv. 780–86 in laisse 32 add detail on Ernol and Baudouin of Beauvais.

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 35–7: the council of Clermont and the reaction of the women left behind	Laisse 35 corresponds to laisse 35 in A, but contains additional material. Laisses 36–42 recount the pope's sermon and the taking of the Cross by Hugh of Vermandois and Robert of Flanders. Laisses 43–4 are close to but not identical with laisses 36–7.
No equivalent	Laisses 45–7 give background on the Chevalier au Cygne, Godfrey and his brothers.
No equivalent.	Laisse 48: Bohemond takes the Cross.
Laisses 38–48: negotiations with the emperor of Constantinople	Laisses 49–58: minor differences.
Laisse 49: the purpose of the Crusade	Laisse 60: purpose of Crusade. Adds a reference to Lambert of Liège
Laisse 50: arrival at Nicaea	Laisse 61: arrival at Nicaea. There is a reminder of Civetot at vv. 1513–21. Some of the names are different.
Laisse 51–60: siege of Nicaea	Laisses 62–71: siege of Nicaea. Minor differences, notably reference to St-Pol and St-Denis in laisse 64.
Laisse 61: siege of Nicaea	No equivalent
Laisses 62–7: siege of Nicaea	Laisses 72–7: siege of Nicaea
Laisses 67–77:siege and fall of Nicaea	Laisses 78–87: same content, structure and rhyme but with additional material. Laisse 78 contains a feat by Enguerrand at vv. 1914–24. Laisse 80 contains additional material on Enguerrand and Hugh, and laisse 82 on Stephen of Blois. Laisses 83 and 84 show considerable differences from A. Laisse 87 contains extra material on the fall of Nicaea.
Laisses 78–89: aftermath of the fall of Nicaea and Soliman's appeal to the sultan for help.	Laisses 88–98. There is a small amount of additional material in laisses 90–91. Laisse 94 combines laisses 84 and 85, retaining the shift from -é to -és in the rhyme.

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 90–100: Dorylaeum	Laisses 99–109. Small amount of additional material in laisses 102–3, 107 and 109. Laisse 106 has the same content and rhyme scheme as A but different wording.
Laisse 101: sermon by Adhemar	Laisse 110: same length and content but different rhyme (-is; ms A has -erge).
Laisses 102–13: diversion to Tarsus	Laisses 111–22. Minor differences. No mention of Bohemond in Laisse 111. Laisse 116 contains a short reminder of Ida's prophecy (vv. 2845–7). Laisse 119 contains additional material on Tancred. Laisse 122 inserts an additional episode, where Ector de Salorie takes a message to Soliman (vv. 3075–80).
Laisses 114–15: death of Gosson	Laisses 123–4: death of Gosson. Comments on Franks at vv. 3103–8.
Laisses 116–25: Christians and Saracens settle in for the siege of Antioch.	Laisses 125–34. Minor differences.
No equivalent	Laisses 135–8: sufferings of the 'chétifs' in captivity, and Godfrey's revenge.
Laisse 126: Christians prepare to attack.	Laisse 139: similar though some names garbled, for example Renaus de Sigal for Rainals de Nivele.
Laisses 127–39: Christians set up siege around Antioch.	Laisses 140–52: minor differences. Laisse 151 describing Robert of Flanders is displaced to follow the description of the Tafurs.
Laisses 140–63: skirmishing round Antioch.	Laisses 153–76: minor differences: small additions in laisses 174 (vv. 4335–9) and 175 (vv. 4386–91).
No equivalent	Laisse 177: additional material on the bisected Saracen and a battle on the bridge.
Laisses 164–6: battle on bridge and heroism of Raimbaut Creton.	Laisses 178–80: minor differences.
No equivalent.	Laisse 181: additional laisse on Raimbaut Creton.
Laisses 167–9: further material on Raimbaut Creton.	Laisses 182–4: minor differences.

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
No equivalent.	Laisse 185: further battle at bridge.
No equivalent.	Laisse 186: Rainalt Porcet. Includes vv. 3894–901 from laisse 169 in A.
Laisses 170–74: first part of Rainalt Porcet episode.	Laisses 187–90: Rainalt Porcet but with additional material. Laisse 189 combines 172–173 although preserving the change of rhyme. Additional material is inserted at vv. 4781–88, 4804–8, 4843–6, 4809–11, 4902–10 and 4966–74. There is also additional material at 4893–8 in laisse 189, strengthening the parallel between Rainalt's torture and the Passion of Christ.
Laisses 175–87: further fighting round Antioch. Conclusion of the story of Rainalt Porcet.	Laisses 191–203: largely similar although B consistently adds extra material: laisse 191: references to the St-Pols, Thomas of Marle and the Tafurs (vv. 5019, 5021, 5047–51); laisse 192: additional comments on the truce (vv. 5089–92) laisse 194: reference to the abbot of Fécamp and bishop of Forez (v. 5170); vv. 5177–83; laisses 195–7: additional material on Godfrey (vv. 5202–5, 5222–4, 5236–9); laisses 199–200: longer prayer (vv. 5236–9, 5324–8); laisses 201–2: extra material on barons (vv. 5382–9, 5425–9); laisse 202: reference again to the abbot of Fécamp and bishop of Forez (vv. 5426–7); extra material on Rainalt Porcet (vv. 5473–8); vv. 5455–68 expanded; laisse 203: adds detail that head of Garsion's nephew catapulted into city (vv. 5480–82)
Laisses 188–94: Garsion seeks a messenger and Sansadoine volunteers.	Laisses 204–10: similar but with additional lines to add emphasis, generally at the end of the laisse (vv. 5671–7, 5706–14, 5741–4, 5754–60).

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 195–200: Sansadoine's journey to see the Sultan	Laisses 211–16: similar but with additional material (vv. 1860–63, 5869–79, 5911–18). The order in laisse 215 is changed. Laisse 216 shows the sultan and Corbaran greeting Sansadoine (vv. 6004–19) in a way that rather contradicts his reception by them later.
Laisses 201–11: Sansadoine delivers his message. Saracen counsel.	Laisses 217–27: similar but with small amounts of additional material in some laisses (vv. 6068–71, 6158–62, 6274–77, 6312–18, 6636–9, 6353–57, 6390–92).
Laisse 212: Brohadas volunteers	Laisse 228: adds prophecy of Saracen defeat at the end (vv. 6425–34).
Laisses 213–22: the caliph writes out. Saracen armies converge.	Laisses 229–38: similar but with small amounts of additional material at the end of most laisses. Further prophecy of Saracen defeat in laisse 238 (vv. 6612–16).
Laisses 223–227: Corbaran sets off with Brohadas to Antioch via Edessa.	Laisses 239–43: similar but with small amounts of additional material at the end of each laisse.
Laisses 228–32: capture and return of Turkish child.	Laisses 244–8: similar but with small amounts of additional material in each laisse. Laisse 248 gives additional details on barons present (vv. 6968–75).
Laisses 233–4: flight of Stephen of Blois	Laisses 249–50: similar but with small amounts of additional material.
Laisse 235	Laisse 251: adds reference to Longinus (vv. 7070, 7072–5).
Laisses 236–245: Datien prepares to betray Antioch.	Laisses 252–61: similar but with small amounts of additional material in each laisse, notably: details of counsel in laisse 252 (vv. 7113–20); laisse 254: a more than usually plodding addition describing the Turks getting up in the morning (vv. 7193–9); laisse 261: prayer by Godfrey (vv. 7454–61)

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 246–52: Christians hesitate to climb into Antioch	Laisses 262–8: similar but with small amounts of additional material, in each laisse, notably: laisse 265: Robert and Godfrey exhort the Christians (vv. 7556–64); laisse 266: additions to Godfrey's prayer (vv. 7788–99).
Laisses 253–4: Fulcher is the first to climb into Antioch.	Laisse 269: combines the two laisses in A. More barons and a different order at vv. 7711–25.
Laisses 255–8: Datien encourages Christians. His brother killed for refusal to apostasies.	Laisses 270–73: similar but with small amounts of additional material, notably: laisse 272: Datien's profession of faith (vv. 7823–30); laisse 273: prayer by Godfrey (vv. 7877–81).
Laisses 259–65: fall of Antioch and slaughter of civilians.	Laisses 274–80. Small amounts of additional material in laisses 274–6.
Laisses 266–8: Christians now trapped in Antioch under pressure from both outside and inside.	Laisses 281–3: closely similar other than different pagan names at laisse 283 (vv. 8229–32).
Laisses 269–72: despite the presages of Soliman's warning and Sansadoine's dream, Corbaran arrives at Antioch.	Laisses 284–7: minor differences.
Laisse 273: death of Roger of Barneville	Laisse 288: adds a <i>prière du plus grand peril</i> at vv. 8375–83.
Laisse 274: a somewhat odd laisse summarising action to date with different details.	Laisse 289: similar but with a small but important variant. At v. 6732 A refers to Garsion 'qui la tete ot colpee' although this does not happen until the end of the text. The equivalent line in B, 8409, simply refers to him as 'a la barbe melee'.
Laisses 275–7: negotiations of Sansadoine and Corbaran; episodes of rusty weapons and Corbaran writing out.	Laisses 290–92: minor differences. In laisse 291 v. 8463 specifies that Sansadoine was unhappy with his bargain with Corbaran. In 292 vv. 8509–10 look ahead to the discussion with Calabra.
Laisses 278–83: dialogue of Calabra and Corbaran	Laisses 293–8: similar but with additional details. Laisse 296 has details on the pagan sacrifice (vv. 8600–602); laisse 295 changes Calabra's reaction from fright to anger (v. 8624).

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisse 284: famine and Turkish attack from citadel.	Laisse 299: adds episode of Robert of Flanders needing a horse (vv. 8668–82).
Laisses 285–7: Stephen of Blois tells the emperor the Christian cause is lost; lament of Guy; famine.	Laisses 300–302: closely similar.
Laisses 288–92: visions, the discovery of the Lance and sighting of a comet.	Laisses 303–7: closely similar. Vers 8867 is a good example of B's tendency to labour the obvious.
Laisses 293–9: the embassy to Corbaran.	Laisses 308–14: minor differences. In laisse 313 there is additional material in Herluin's speech (vv. 9112–15) and an attack on the envoys (vv. 9122–34).
Laisses 300–301: Robert of Normandy takes offence at Godfrey's precedence.	Laisses 315–16: additional material in 315 on emperor (vv. 9206–10); mention of the Rhine (vv. 9218–20); reference to Orion at v. 9225 where A refers to Bouillon; reference to Eustace of Boulogne (vv. 9276–77).
Laisses 302–4: Bohemond tests morale; Amedelis is sent to report on the Christian camp; episode of Eurvin of Creel and Pierre Postel.	Laisses 317–19: closely similar except that Eurvin of Creel is called Herluins.
Laisse 305: the day of the battle.	Laisse 320: vv. 9422–3 advertise a 'boine cancon'. Vers 7678 from A omitted; 9944–6 inserted.
Laisses 306–14: Adhemar puts on armour. After all the princes have refused, he agrees to carry the Lance into battle. Raymond IV remains in Antioch.	Laisses 321–9: minor differences.
Laisses 315–28: the Christian columns march out.	Laisses 330–43: same order and content but some differences. Laisses 328 and 331 insert extra material (vv. 9663–6, 9744–6, 9758–62). Laisses 332 and 333 add a comment by Corbaran at the end. Laisses 338 and 339 omit the comments by Rouge Lion in A. Laisse 343 omits v. 8349 in A marking the end of the marching out, 'nos escieles sont toutes d'Anthioce sevrées'.
Laisse 329: Adhemar's sermon; death of the Occitan spy; Corbaran agrees the signal for defeat.	Laisse 344: additional material at vv. 10167–72, 10200.

B.N. fr.12558 (ms A)	B.N. fr.786
Laisses 330–32: Corbaran now offers battle by combat but the Christians refuse.	Laisses 345–7: closely similar.
Laisses 333–43: battle is joined.	Laisses 348–58: closely similar. In laisse 353 v. 10462 drops A's reference to a 'chancon' in v. 8647.
Laisses 344–6: Corbaran wounded by Robert of Normandy; miraculous recovery.	Laisses 359–61: additional material. In laisse 359 vv. 8752–5 and 10575–9 different from A; vv. 10589–93 added. In laisse 360 vv. 10600, 10608–11, 10617–24 added. In laisse 361 vv. 10638–45 added. Laisse 360 is assonanced rather than rhymed.
Laisses 347–354: battle continues with the deaths of Brohadas and William of Senlis.	Laisses 362–9: largely similar, small amounts of additional material in laisses 363–6.
Laisses 355–6: list of combatants on each side.	Laisse 370: list of Christian combatants. Omits Jofrois de la Tor (v. 8992), Fouciers l'Orphelin and Raimbaut Creton (v. 8994). Laisse 371: list of Saracen combatants. Vers 10885 specifies that there were 90 rather than the 50 described in MS A.
Laisses 357–60: closing stages of battle.	Laisses 372–5: closely similar, small additions in laisses 372 and 374.
Laisses 361–6: Godfrey pursues Corbaran. Adhemar gives a victory sermon.	Laisses 376–81: largely similar. In laisse 379 vv. 11181–5 add material on Mary Magdalene. In laisse 381 vv. 11218–21 give additional detail on Godfrey's treatment. Vers 9343 from A is omitted.
Laisses 367–74: Garsion flees and Bohemond negotiates his way into the citadel, becoming the ruler of Antioch.	Laisse 382: departs from A. An alternative version in which Garsion is converted to Christianity and Corbaran's flight described. Adhemar dies and is replaced by the bishop of Mautran.

Main passages found in B.N. fr.786 (Nelson) absent from B. N. fr.12558 (Duparc-Quioc): *Laisses 35–42* (vv. 846–1043)

The Council of Clermont

35. '[...] I shall go there myself: that is the right course of action and the sensible thing to do. I shall tell them all about the situation with those villainous Saracens who have insulted God and His Holy Name. Now it is for them to go and take vengeance and we will absolve them.' With that, he had letters written and sealed with lead, sending them by messenger out to all regions. Now the messengers set off without delay, summoning barons in every corner of the realm. The barons did not hang back when they heard the message: they made their way to Clermont without delay. So did the pope and his numerous entourage. There they found the French nobility, dukes and counts, German and French. The reason for the gathering was explained and put to them.

36. My lords, pray silence and may God bless you! It was one Easter day: all the birds were singing, the nightingale and the blackbird and the magpie, while the lark soared up high into the air singing at the top of its voice; the woods were in leaf and the meadows green.² The knighthood of France and England and all of Normandy was at Clermont in the Auvergne: prince, duke and count all with their households. The pope (of Rome) finished Mass, then came out of the castle into the middle of the meadow. Everybody was sitting on the green grass. The pope stood alone. He admonished them as follows: 'My lords,' he said, 'allow me in the name of God to explain why I have come to France and what I intend to ask of you. It is 1095 years since the [Virgin] Mary conceived Jesus Christ without intercourse and gave birth to Him painlessly with no suffering. Jesus Christ was to live for more than 32 years with His disciples, until the Easter day bright with flowers when He reached Jerusalem. That evening Judas treacherously betrayed Him in the service of the Jews. May the body of God damn him! The Jews battered Jesus with their fists and scourged Him, then crucified Him on the Mount of Calvary.³ His body was laid in a tomb. He lay there in death then came back to life. When He ascended into heaven with His disciples, He gave His tomb and His cross into our keeping. The wicked pagan bastards [then] took Jerusalem. Their horses soiled and defiled every single altar or sacred crypt in the cathedral because those accursed people turned it into a stable.⁴ The Tomb and the Cross passed into their control: they neither honoured, served nor glorified them. My lords, I implore you

² Standard lyric opening: compare, e.g., the virtuoso interpretation by Raimbaut d'Aurenga in his lyric 'Ar resplan la flors enversa', where the power of love transforms winter into spring: W.T. Pattison (ed.), *The Life and Works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d'Orange* (Minneapolis, 1952). In fact, the speech was in November.

³ The Jews are firmly cast as the villains: cf. the pogroms of 1096 and 1147. The role of the Romans is glossed over.

⁴ For the defilement of the Holy Places see RM, p. 80; AA, pp. 4–5.

in the name of God and the Blessed Virgin Mary to take pity on this lost land. Take up the cross, all of you, so that the Virgin may afford you her aid and succour in the next life, and honour and a good life in this.⁵

37. 'My lords,' said the pope, 'listen to what I have to say. I am your father in the Lord according to our beliefs. It is not for me to give you anything but good advice. We have lost the Promised Land that God granted to those held captive in the land of Egypt in Pharaoh's power. He delivered them from their captivity by the hands of Moses and his brother Aaron, granting them Jerusalem and the lands around it. From then on they defended that land with all their might.⁵ That was where God suffered death and agony for us: He was betrayed by His disciple Judas and the ink-black villains hanged Him from the Cross. Our Father suffered all this for our salvation so that He could release our souls from the infernal dwelling where we are all judged without redemption. This land is lost as the people of Mohammed possess it. Persians and Slavs range freely over it. If we do not take it from them it will never be ours. My lords, remember the Passion Our Lord suffered for our redemption. Let each of you take the cross, the staff and the scrip to go and avenge Jesus for the great dishonour the Persians and Slavs have inflicted on your land. Now raise yourselves to your knees. Confess in affliction the sins you have committed in your great wickedness and I will grant you the absolution of Jesus.'⁶ The whole assembly knelt. In silence, uttering not a sound, they confessed their sins in good faith and waited for forgiveness. The pope stood up, alone and with no acolytes. He began to speak loudly, praying as follows: 'Glorious Lord, God of glory, Who suffered the Passion and brought back the blessed Lazarus from the dead: Lord, as that is true and our belief, so, Lord and true Father, listen to those who lie prostrate in the ground here to seek Your forgiveness. Take away the sins they have committed against you. Pardon them, glorious Lord. I absolve them in your name. Let them be forgiven their sins, evil men and good alike.'

38. The first to rise to his feet was the king of France. He addressed the pope: 'My Lord, listen to what I have to say in the name of God. I am an old man. I have laboured and suffered much.⁷ I am not capable of going on Crusade. But my brother Hugh, a valiant knight, will go. I will give and grant him all my wealth so that he can undertake this journey joyfully for my sins.' When Hugh heard this, he was filled with joy and delight. Kissing [his brother's] legs and feet in recognition of the great gift he had been given, he took the cross: so did 100 others in front and behind, princes and dukes and counts. The bishop [of Le Puy] was delighted to get his cross first. The crowd pressed forward with the sheer number

⁵ Compare RM, pp. 83; 98; 111–12; 125; 155 for comparisons between the crusaders and the Israelites, and Adhemar and Moses.

⁶ Standard crusade theology: the crusaders are cast as pilgrims and the reward is absolution of sins. Riley-Smith, *Idea*, pp. 22–5.

⁷ In point of fact he was 43 and had been excommunicated by Urban II for bigamy and adultery. He is recast here in the mould of Charlemagne, the elderly king.

of crusaders. Some 200,000 all swore by their own heads that, if Jesus allowed them safe passage across the sea, the time had come to make Mohammed suffer!

39. Count Hugh addressed the king [of France], thanking him for his gift, the honour and the prestige he had given him that day. He said that he would go proudly to the Sepulchre where God suffered death and came back to life. 'Even if somebody tried to stop me, I should be determined to go. Be sure you give me enough of your knights to ensure that God's army has sufficient support from you.' The king readily granted this on oath. Huge numbers of crosses were taken up for God. The crosses were attached firmly to their cloaks and mantels as large numbers of the French took the cross. Those not present heard the news and promptly took the cross in their turn. Count Robert of Flanders left his fief for Arras to see his beloved Clemence.⁸ He explained gently to her: 'Madam, I have taken the cross. Do not be downcast! I seek your leave to go to Syria and deliver the Sepulchre from the accursed race.' The countess's face darkened when she heard this. 'My lord,' she replied, 'you will never go with my leave. You have two handsome sons (Jesus bless them): they greatly need you and your support.' When the count heard this, he clasped her tightly in his arms. 'Madam,' said the count, 'listen. I swear to you that once I have laid my offering at the Sepulchre, kissed it and made my prayer, I promise unreservedly that I will start my return journey within 15 days, if God grants me life.' [His] lady held his hand and he swore to do so. There was not a dry eye in the house. The duke of Bouillon also attached a cross; so did Baldwin, Eustace and the other barons. Now they of necessity take the cross throughout France.⁹

40. Now the people loved and held dear by God take the cross, counts and overlords and rich princes. Once they were all ready with equipment and beasts of burden, the host was assembled at Clermont in the Auvergne. According to the source there were more than 100,000. You might have seen enormous numbers of helmets glittering, birds of prey mewed and handsome sparrowhawks; they brought large numbers of enthusiastic dogs with them, whom they set to hunt.¹⁰ I have never heard anyone describe such a large army. There were large numbers of girls and women of high reputation. Had you been there you would have seen cloaks and mantles sporting the cross, scrips being tied on and staffs tipped with metal; you would have heard princes swearing solemnly that even mortal danger would not make them turn back. Once they had taken Jerusalem with the help of God, they would deliver it from the people of the devil.

41. There was a huge assembly at Clermont in the Auvergne; many princes, counts and barons were there [in honour of] God. Pope Urban preached a sermon to

⁸ Clemence was countess of Flanders; later she would become duchess of Brabant after marrying Godfrey I, duke of Brabant.

⁹ Literally 'the land of joy'.

¹⁰ Unlike ms A, which is clear that they wasted no time on such frivolities. See, however, AA for evidence that hawks and hounds did accompany the crusaders (pp. 140–41).

them, saying: 'Noble Christians, for God and for His Name come to the aid of the Sepulchre that is held captive. Those who die in the attempt will receive worthy forgiveness and have their reward in front of God in glory.' Count Hugh rose; so did Raymond of St-Gilles, Godfrey of Bouillon and Robert the Frisian.¹¹ The bishop of Le Puy did likewise and preached a sermon. 'My lords, it is entirely right that we place our trust in this army. Nobody should harm or slight another. If he does, let him be corrected by his companions without recourse to violence, and let us not lose our tempers with each other no matter what the provocation.' The people cried out: 'So be it!' They gladly agreed to what he had asked, leaving their homes and setting off full of devotion to avenge the Lord.¹²

42. Outside on the field at Clermont in the Auvergne was the good King Philip, the dukes and the captains, English, Flemish, Normans and those from Germany. Every single one took the cross: may God look after them and bring them back safely! The pope of Rome blessed them and made the sign of the Cross and commended them into the keeping of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He ordered them to cooperate with each other, and to travel together whether friends or strangers. He commissioned the bishop of Le Puy to carry the standard and command them. His orders were to lead them, to stand up to those who complained, to ensure that nobody lost heart for doing God's work but to keep them marching long stages over mountains and across plains; thus he would swiftly pass through France and Germany, Lombardy and Rome with his whole army, and they would all swiftly come to open country. Jesus would give them victory over the infidel bastards. Adhemar replied to this with calm resolve: 'Since this is your command, my lord, I shall lead them and carry the standard, no matter what the obstacles.'

Laisses 45–8 (vv. 1076–1213)

Ida and her three sons, and Bohemond taking the cross

45. Now the French, those good and noble warriors, make their preparations. The noble King Philip, ruler of France, had 100 knights splendidly equipped: each one had a palfrey or warhorse, two squires to accompany him, boys and pack animals. He gave them to his brother Count Hugh to command. He said that he would go with them, but did not dare leave his lands and territory unattended in case they were attacked.¹³ The bishop of Le Puy, that praiseworthy man, said: 'My noble lord, I grant you complete forgiveness of your sins.' Lady Ida was at Bouillon in her magnificent palace.¹⁴ She gathered her three sons into her arms and began

¹¹ Both versions consistently confuse Robert the Frisian with his son Robert of Flanders.

¹² A slightly odd *laisse similaire* unless this refers to a further sermon by Urban.

¹³ A very real concern of crusaders: Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, pp. 135–9, 145–6.

¹⁴ This ties back to the *Enfances Godefroi*, which forms part of the OFCC.

kissing them. 'My children,' said their mother, 'I beg you by God not to be mean or to hang back in your giving. Make yourselves loved and appreciated by all. That, my children, is the way to raise your fortunes high. If you see a poor man or a knight who has fallen on hard times, or a maiden or youth, or sergeant or squire in need of something, my beautiful boys, help them immediately without being begged on bended knee.'

'I will certainly do as you ask,' said Baldwin.

'My children, it is now time for you to leave with no delay. I shall never see you again on this earth. I have something to tell you which is true; I do not want to conceal [the truth] from you. You will go on to take the city where the wretched Jews bound Our Lord to the stake.' At this she fell on the floor in a faint. Her three children rushed to pick her up. They left in tears – may God guard them against all danger!

46. Ida kissed her sons, who would go on to do so many great deeds. She sighed in anguish and would not be comforted. 'My children,' said their mother, 'you are [all] admirable. I know full well that the time has come for us to part. I will never see you again, and that makes me deeply unhappy. I will tell you one thing for certain. It is you who will capture the city where God allowed his body to be tortured on the Cross to redeem his people. My children, when you are in the kingdom of Outremer, with poor young men suffering wretchedly, enduring anxiety and thirst and hunger alongside the princes and counts who are your responsibility, be sure to give the army and the poor your bread and your protection – in full measure. Do not stint or be miserly or stingy, or guard your own wealth jealously. If you see a knight carry out some praiseworthy feat, don't reject him if he needs something. If you have two horses, lend one of them; take it with you into the press of battle and it will help you to keep body and soul together. My children, I enjoin you to venerate all of high rank. Fame will accompany your every step: I beg you not to be diverted by any mean behaviour. It is thus that your prestige and honour will grow. I can say nothing more. It is time for you to go. I beg Jesus, the Salvation of all, to grant you Paradise at the end of your lives.' She then had the arms brought to Godfrey that had been left in her keeping by his eminent father, the much renowned Swan Knight. 'My noble son,' said his mother, 'it is fitting for you to carry these. They will serve you well in the kingdom of Outremer.' Godfrey took them with delight, forgetting neither the precious ivory horn, nor the hauberk or the shield, the well-made shining helmet and the spear blade (which he had fitted to a shaft).¹⁵ He had them loaded and lashed onto a pack animal. In my view he would not have given them up for three times their weight in pure gold.

47. 'My children,' said his mother, 'I know full well that you are leaving. I am quite sure that you will never see me again – you should hardly be surprised that I

¹⁵ The *Enfances Godefroi*, laisse 62, has a similar scene of Godfrey being given weapons; vv.1719–26 specify that the sword was forged by Wayland and would later be used at Antioch.

am upset. I tell you now and in all seriousness that you will capture the city where God was tormented.'

'Madam,' said Godfrey, 'how do you know this?'

'My noble son,' said the lady, 'it is because a holy angel told me that you would be the king [of Jerusalem] before you were even born. You will have more than enough troubles and difficulties. My noble son, love the poor: hold them in respect and speak to them kindly. Treat priests and clerics with the utmost veneration. Share generously what you have. Thus you will be loved and served by all, and if you fall into need you will get help and assistance.'

'Madam,' said Baldwin, 'in God's name please pull yourself together.'

'Since that is your wish, my noble son, I shall, willingly. But I beg Godfrey, the eldest among you, not to forget my parting gifts. My father sent them to him a full three years before his birth and I have kept them ever since. Now the time is coming when you will need them: through them that noble city will be taken where the body of Jesus Christ was hanged on the cross. With this she kissed all three, and they parted. The lady, distinguished by her beauty, turned back. Meanwhile our French rode swiftly and gladly, covering so much ground each day over plains and meadows that [before long] they were pitching pavilions, tents and bivouacs around the rich city of Constantinople. There they awaited reinforcements from other countries. Bohemond and Tancred were still in Apulia.

48. These two had attacked a wealthy king back home and, trapping him in a castle, laid siege to it.¹⁶ When they heard the news about the noble kin of the elderly and powerful King Philip of France, how they had all taken the cross and gone overseas with a force of 500,000, then the news of the contempt the wicked pagans had evinced for Christianity and the way they had taken the city of Jerusalem, both of them were plunged into abject grief. 'My lords,' said Bohemond, 'listen to what I think. Let us go to seek salvation for our souls and for Christianity. If anyone fails God now, may he never win salvation. Let us all take the cross, every last one, and go overseas; we have arms, wine and corn to hand.'

'Let it be done as you wish!' they all replied. They immediately took the cross without delay. When they had all done so, they counted their numbers and found they amounted to more than 50,000. That night they rested. The following day they mounted their horses and did not draw rein until they reached the coast. There they embarked on the ships; God granted them such a [favourable] wind that it carried them all the way to the noble city of Constantinople, where they dropped anchor. Our French were horrorstricken at the sight, sure that these were pagans or Esclers. Then they recognised that the banner was a Christian one. They ran straight to the shore, asking who the new arrivals were. They were told it was Bohemond, accompanied by Tancred and large numbers of dukes, counts and rich princes. The barons thanked God when they heard this. They came to meet them at the port, giving them a warm welcome: both sides dissolved into tears, overcome by emotion. This ensured that the army [now] had abundant supplies, having up

¹⁶ This refers to their attack on Amalfi: cf. RM, p. 91.

till then had very little bread, wine or corn. Every single man joined in offering thanks to God.

Laisse 106

This has the same rhyme and content as its counterpart in A, but different wording:

106. When the Normans saw the pagan bastards, they gave their horses their heads and charged down across the battlefield towards them. Every last one of them broke a lance [in combat]; if you had been there you would have seen a prodigious battle. Imagine the sight of William attacking these infidels! He headed for Richenés and plunged his sword into his body, bathing the sword in [the blood in] the middle of his heart and knocking him dead from his horse, completely unconcerned if anyone did not like it. Then he struck Saladin on his helmet from Aquitaine and smashed in his head whether or not the Turk wanted. The Turks were demoralised by the fierceness of the battle and shouted their warcry in some consternation. They left Clapamor and Torgant lying dead on the field. When Soliman saw this he did not hang about. He immediately put 500 archers into battle and ordered them to take aim at the youth who was inflicting such damage on his troops. William was dismayed to see them coming onto the field. ‘Tancred, where is your banner?’ he yelled at the top of his voice. ‘Look at all these people marching towards me!’ He grabbed a spear with a large pennon and aimed at Soliman [the younger] regardless of what anyone might think, knocking him flying straight away with the force of his thrust. Soliman [the older] was furious at the sight. He shouted loudly, ‘Men, what on earth are you doing? Mohammed, may you bring harm on those who killed my son whatever they may say. I will never cease to lament his loss.’ Deeply discomfited, he swung round his bay [horse] from Moriane and killed two knights plus the duke of Aquitaine. Seeing this, Bohemond signed himself with the cross in God’s name. He launched an attack that none could avoid, killing more than 2,000 Turks in short order. That was the point at which William was killed with a sword in the entrails. Tancred hit and cursed himself at the sight, nearly falling from his horse [in the midst of] the battlefield. He drew his finely worked sword. Anyone on the receiving end would suffer the consequences.

Laisse 110

This has a different rhyme from the equivalent in version A

110. That day the noble bishop robed himself. Blessing holy water, they buried their dead. ‘My lord,’ said the bishop, ‘listen to what I have to say. Let me tell you straight away that anyone who dies here has found salvation. The souls from these

bodies are already in Paradise, and they will stay there for all time comforted and joyful.' That night they slept happily and without concern.

Laisse 122, vv. 3075–80:

Ector de Salorie is sent as a messenger.

[...] Ector of Salorie slipped out of a postern gate and fled across the wastelands to the Turks. He came upon the white-bearded Soliman. When Soliman caught sight of him, he cried: 'So where are my children? Tell me everything.' The messenger replied, 'The Franks have killed them and taken your city.'

Laisses 134–8

The 'chétifs' in captivity

134. [...] Let us leave them at this point, saying nothing more about them: we shall come back to them later. We shall turn our attention to Peter [the Hermit] and his followers, last seen in defeat on the battlefield at Nicaea.

135. My lords, listen to what happened to Peter. I shall tell you something of the barons under his command, led off by the Turks to an onerous captivity. Our French barons were in prison, namely Harpin of Bourges and Richard of Caumont, the noble-hearted Baldwin of Beauvais and the handsome-featured Fulcher of Melun; as is well known the bishop of Forez was there and the very noble abbot of Fécamp, along with many others whose names I do not know. These Franks were held in prison in Olierne. They had virtually nothing to eat or drink; they were knocked about and deprived of basic necessities, struck and prodded with a goad when they were unable to carry lime and sand. Richard of Caumont often found himself carrying large squared-off stones, lime and sand in an A-frame.¹⁷ A wall was being built to shut off access to the keep. Calabra had a mason summoned from Baghdad, an unpleasant and cowardly type called Tristamans.¹⁸ He made a habit of menacing our Franks with the goad. This angered Richard and the noble Harpin. 'Alas, this is a terrible place to be in prison!' said our Franks. 'Let us stick together as companions,' said the bishop. God will pardon us as we suffer in

¹⁷ The OF word is 'chieferon'. Nelson translates this as a wheelbarrow, which we have not found attested. This might simply be a variant of 'chief' for the sake of the rhyme. However it is closer to 'chevron'. This might be an A-frame of the sort still used in developing countries to carry large loads. Experienced builders carry bricks in a chevron shape; however this would not work for lime and sand.

¹⁸ Literally 'sad lover': vv. 4717–20 show a similar lyric influence.

penitence.' Richard took a stone and carried it to the mason. 'You carry this up,' he said to him. 'Damn all those who believe in Mohammed!'¹⁹

136. The mason was up on the wall, eyeing Richard narrowly. When he had finished his scrutiny, he shouted harshly to him: 'You there, take that stone to where it belongs! In the name of my god Mohammed, no other stone will do for that spot.' 'Let me tell you,' said Richard, 'it will not be me carrying it.' At this the mason fell on him, punching and pinching him and stabbing him four times with his goad so that crimson blood dripped down onto the ground. At this Richard lost his temper. He flung down the stone and snatched up a huge masons' hammer. He smashed it down on the mason and rained down furious blows; and the master mason fell dead of a heart attack. His soul went down to Hell, carried by Cerberus.²⁰ 'Why are you all going down, you infidels?' said Richard. 'I don't know anything about what happened: the hammer just slipped out of my hand.'²¹ The other masons fled, scattering in all directions and saying to each other: 'This is a terrible turn of events! What will become of us if the master mason is dead? It will go badly for us now because he will not be doing any more work.'²² The news soon spread like wildfire that Richard had killed the mason from Baghdad. Calabria was furious when she found out (although she subsequently became a fan of Richard's, as her actions were to show).²³ Our Franks were seized, beaten and hit. They were put to work in the quarry, not to be allowed out until the old woman [Calabra] gave the word.

137. So there were our captives in the depths of the quarry, beaten and knocked about and thoroughly badly treated. The bishop of Forez wept bitterly. The abbot of Fécamp sighed deeply. Richard and Harpin were beside themselves. The other Franks, swollen with hunger, all prayed desperately to Our Lord. No man living now, no matter how cruel, could have failed to be moved by their misery.

138. My lords, now listen to [the deeds of] the noble warriors. A large force led by Peter was taken at Civetot, heavily defeated. The strongly defended city of Nicaea was then taken along with many other castles I am not mentioning. All this was the work of Bohemond and a large leadership, Godfrey and the others (may God help them!). They avenged Peter and his knights. Once the land had been thoroughly laid waste and rendered uninhabitable, they made their way straight to Antioch. The army blessed by God rode on in force, not drawing rein until they reached Antioch. They took the bridge across the Orontes and the mosque, then pitched their tents of silk from Almeria, setting up camp in the fields the other side of the

¹⁹ It is not clear who says what to whom here.

²⁰ A rare classical reference.

²¹ Possibly a line has got lost here: the general sense seems to be that they are deserting the scaffolding in a hurry having seen the murder.

²² Without the master mason work on the site could not go ahead. See L. R. Shelby, 'The Role of the Master Mason in Mediaeval English Building', *S*, 39 (1964), pp. 387–403.

²³ This refers to events in the *Chétifs*, where the Christians come repeatedly to the aid of Corbaran and Calabra.

bridge until the following morning when the army awoke and the leaders went out into the meadows.

Laisse 177

The bisected Saracen and battle at the bridge

The Aragonese warhorse made its way into Antioch, its neck and hindquarters drenched with blood. One thousand wicked Saracens immediately clustered round, hitting themselves in the jaw and the chest and the chin. They stared at the size and length of the blow struck. 'That is King Faraon!' they said to each other. 'The Franks are extraordinary. There is no escape. This man here was extremely brave and well renowned. The one who gave him this blow is our enemy for ever.' With this they invoked Tervagant and Mohammed, Apollon and Jupins, Baraton and Noiron. Let us leave them doing so and turn our attention to the [Christian] nobles. There was a heavy battle at the Iron Bridge. Many good blows were struck by Tancred and Bohemond, Robert of Normandy and Robert the Frisian, Count Lambert of Liège and the noble Jaidon,²⁴ Thomas of Marle and Conan of Brittany, Enguerrand of St-Pol and Lord Raimbaut Creton, Roger of Barneville, Baldwin Cauderon, and Duke Godfrey fiercer than a lion; the handsome Baldwin and Eustace; William the Carpenter, Anselm of Valbeton, Lord Alan of Nantes and Fulcher of Clermont; Lord Hugh the Maisnés, brother to King Philip; and the noble barons, whom God pardon. I cannot possibly name them all and am not going to try further, but they inflicted massive damage on the wicked Saracens. The water was deep and the bridge narrow. So many villainous Saracens fell into the water that the flow was blocked, as the song recounts. The Tafur King and his companions rained down blows, leaving heaps of dead in the water of the Orontes.

Laisse 181

Additional material on Raimbaut Creton

181. Raimbaut Creton was a noble and well-renowned knight. Far from being tall, lanky or of great height, he was rather on the short side but well built and sturdy. When he caught sight of (and saw) the greedy bastards, he jumped down from his warhorse and plunged into the river immediately. He swam all the way to the bridge carrying his lance and his tempered sword. May God who brings virtue in Heaven come to his aid! Grabbing hold of a stake, he levered himself up out of the water and made for the Turks brandishing his lance. That day won him great praise from princes and dukes.

²⁴ It is not clear who this is.

Laisses 185–6

Additional material on the skirmishes round Antioch and introduction to the episode of Rainalt Porcet

185. At this point I shall say no more about Raimbaut, who was completely recovered; instead, I shall tell you about those from the noble land. There was heavy slaughter at the Iron Bridge, and that day many Turks and Almoravids were killed. It is absolutely true just as it is written down: 500 were killed outright on the bridge. Those who jumped into the water thought they would be safe, but reckoned without our men chasing them and raining blows on them. Twelve very noble emirs died there; they came from an exotic country near Babylon, sent to aid Garsion by his close friend the sultan of Persia. They were accompanied by a noble knight who was Garsion's son, and a valiant and courageous knight. His name was Sansadoine and he was Garsion's son. He had recently come from Antioch at his father's command. He flung himself into the fray to help his pagan allies. When he saw the beating being inflicted on his emirs, he was so overcome with emotion as to be nearly beside himself. The king made dispiritedly for Antioch and the Saracens followed him, demoralised and in a bad way. The king, furious, rode in front of them. Meanwhile the Franks pursued them wielding their bright swords, cutting off their heads and arms and slashing open their chests. I swear to you in faith that 500 of them were killed.

186. Thoroughly scared, the king made for Antioch accompanied by those who had managed to escape. Their enemies the [Frankish] barons chased them all the way to Antioch without drawing rein. There was a sharp skirmish around the gate. It was there that the renowned knight Rainalt Porcet achieved a heroic feat that I shall tell you about. He was so busy landing blows on the Turks that he was oblivious to the fact he had entered the city. When he looked round him, now in Antioch, the door was closed and barred. He knew full well that was his death warrant. He invoked God, the King of Majesty: 'Glorious Lord and Father who was hanged from the Cross, have mercy on my soul because it is all over with my body. I shall have no priest or cleric to confess me. So will you pardon my sins, Lord? Alas, my beautiful lady, you will never see me again, nor will I see you nor you me: that makes matters much worse. When I left you behind and turned to leave, you kissed me four times as a mark of your great devotion. May those who treat you well be honoured by God. As for you, Robert of Flanders, noble and honoured count, I send my greetings to you uttered [in the name of] God of majesty, and to all the lords assembled here.' With these words he put his back to the wall; he had no cover from behind and was under heavy attack from the front. The shield round his neck was pierced with holes knocked through it, and the hauberk on his back was ripped and torn. His fresh warhorse was killed beneath him. He was angry and dismayed to find himself on foot. He grasped his sword with its gilded hilt; anyone he hit suffered serious injury and death. Our barons returned to their bivouacs and tents; they had taken the emir of the Esclers prisoner

and led him back with them. He was placed under captivity in the tent of Hugh of Vermandois. He was the nephew of Garsion, son of his sister; so you can be sure that once [Garsion] finds out he will be far from happy. At this point I shall turn my attention away from the pagan infidels for a moment. If you want to hear, first I shall tell you the next instalment of how Rainalt Porcet was ejected from the cellar, how he was treated and the respect shown him, and how he was then tortured and humiliated when King Garsion turned on him viciously. Listen for a while and come up close to me; I will tell you all about how he was treated, how he was humiliated and terribly injured. May the God of Glory who was hanged from the Cross curse all those who made him suffer so much.

Laisse 265 (vv. 7557–64)

Robert of Flanders and Godfrey encourage the Christians

[The Christians are outside Antioch, refusing to climb the siege ladder.] They were thoroughly scared and in a state of great consternation. When Robert the Frisian saw them all being so cowardly, his blood boiled with rage and anger. He sought out the noble Duke Godfrey immediately, beside himself and terrible to behold. Godfrey was astonished to see him in such a state. He begged God, Our Father who redeems us, to protect and deliver our people from death.

Laisse 299 (vv. 8668–81)

Godfrey and Tancred buy a horse for the count of Flanders

[...] However, the count of Flanders was thoroughly out of sorts because he had no horse to ride. He burst into tears, complaining bitterly about his plight. An announcement was made to all the Frankish barons saying that the count was in trouble with no obvious way out. The barons held him in high esteem, and when they realised the situation many noble knights wept in sympathy. The noble duke of Bouillon and Tancred took the initiative. Between them they managed to come by a goblet of pure gold and went round the army of God looking for a horse they could buy for the count. The Germans and men of Poix, Normans and French, Flemings and those from Berry all contributed. They came up with a very good quality horse, and the count swung into the saddle from the left stirrup.²⁵

²⁵ AA (pp. 334–5) and RC (pp. 79–80) say that Robert of Flanders obtained his horse by begging.

Laisse 313 (vv. 9122–34)*Attack on the envoys to Corbaran*

[...] A Turk by the name of Terrient heard their words. He leapt up in a towering rage and seized [Peter] by his moustache. Herluin was furious when he saw this. He drew his steel sword and struck [the Turk] so hard that he sliced him open right down to the chest. As you can picture, the Turks came running up in swarms and flung themselves on the envoys. Herluin did not hang back: he defended himself stoutly. Peter the Hermit looked after himself smartly: he defiantly raised the staff he carried and brought it down on a Turk in front of him, felling him to the ground, then launched a volley of abuse: 'God damn you! You will die, you coward – there is no arguing.'

Laisse 382

A completely different conclusion to the text. Some of this material is in the 'twelve couplets' but the versions bear no resemblance.

382. That night the Christians recovered in their tents from what had been an arduous and difficult day. Listen to what those fools of Saracens had done. They had cooked their food as soon as day broke, thinking that our forces would not dare send out a single soldier against those in the citadel. But thanks to the grace of Jesus, King of Majesty, now they have been shamefully killed and captured. Our men had plenty to eat and drink, filling themselves up with the Turks' [abandoned] food.²⁶ That night they were all friends. The following morning, they brought together and assembled the booty as soon as day broke. Five hundred thousand camels had been taken along with too many mules and pack animals to count; as for the other animals they brought, they could not be counted by hundreds or thousands. They made their way to the wonderful city of Antioch and carried all their booty inside. Abbots and monks and ordained clerics came to meet them with crosses and relics. They gave fervent thanks to God and praised Him. They split up the booty and divided it between them, forgetting neither poor nor rich. Even the one who received least had plenty, enough to live on for the rest of his life provided he looked after it well and did not throw it around. Now listen to [what happened to] the emir up in the citadel. He had watched the entire battle closely. The knights who had fought with his Saracens had left them dead and defeated; and he had seen the winged angels coming and going in the battle. Mohammed had fled the field, turning his back. Garsion sent a banner down to the army of Our Lord; Lord Raymond of St-Gilles presented him with his own banner. The Turk he had sent down took it back with him and fixed it on the highest tower. However

²⁶ RM, p. 173.

the Lombards and Apulians explained to him (which was true) that it was not the banner of the shrewd Bohemond: it belonged to another lord, as they explained in detail. When he heard this, Garsion made his way up the tower and pulled the banner down as soon as possible. Then he had a renowned knight summoned and spoke to him as follows: 'My friend, if you agree please go from here – I beg in the name of friendship – and make your way to Bohemond, the one [whose friendship] I was really after. Tell him to come and seek me out because I have things to say to him.'

'I will happily do so,' replied the knight: he turned and made his way at top speed to the Franks beloved of God. He asked them where Bohemond was and they showed him: 'Look, there he is, sitting over near Tancred.' The knight came up to Bohemond and greeted him in God's name. 'May God be willing to save you, my friend. Now, what can I do for you? Tell me straight out.'

'My lord, my noble and courteous lord, the emir of the great and richly ornamented palace has been most pressing in asking after you amongst our people. He would be keen to talk to you in strict secrecy.'

'My friend,' said Bohemond, 'I am completely at your disposal.' He got onto his horse with all possible speed and made his way at a canter to the steps [of the palace].²⁷ Garsion was delighted to see him. He came down the steps to meet him, begging for clemency. 'Well, noble sir, I have renounced Mohammed. I believe utterly in the God of majesty. Mohammed is not worth as much as a dead dog in my eyes. He has no strength and no power. Let me convert to holy Christianity.' Bohemond was absolutely delighted to hear this, more than at anything else in his entire life. He had word sent to the bishop straight away, who was delighted to drop everything and come. The barons were summoned from all over the city and came without delay. They were called up into the tower two by two, holding hands. The bishop consecrated and blessed the font while the other clergy sang. That was where they baptised Garsion and received him as a Christian, although they did not change or alter his name. He went on to live alongside our barons for some considerable time as a good and loyal friend devoted to Christianity. He listened to the service of God. His household and the men with him were all baptised and became Christians; those who refused were beheaded.²⁸ And that was how our barons liberated the land. They were happy and secure in Antioch, often going down to the river to amuse themselves.

My lords, now listen without making any noise and I will tell you what happened to the bishop of Le Puy, who was inside Antioch with the barons.²⁹ He often preached to them, admonishing them to believe in God and to love him: thus they would have his favour. These sentiments fell on fertile ground with our men. However, disaster loomed. The bishop fell ill by God's wish; and he died after

²⁷ The meaning is not clear. And if Bohemond was in a hurry why go at a gentle pace?

²⁸ A very different account from ms A, where Garsion is beheaded as he flees.

²⁹ The text returns to broad similarity with version A; the 'twelve couplets' start with a similar account.

dining on the fifth day. The princes were appalled. This was a disaster. The whole army was plunged into grief, poor and rich alike weeping bitterly. That night they kept vigil over the body until dawn, then carried it straight to the cathedral of St Peter. Clerks, priests, canons, bishops and abbots had assembled there from all over the city to celebrate the service and sing Mass. Then the entire nobility laid him to rest with every sign of honour in a rich and elaborately carved marble sarcophagus next to the altar of St Peter beloved of God, the very same spot in which they had found the Lance which pierced the side of God on the day the Jews hung Him from the Cross. After the funeral they returned to their lodgings.

That very same day all the barons and ordained clergy in the army held a discussion in council. This was what they said to each other. 'It was a bad day for us when the bishop died. He was a truly good man who comforted us in our hour of need and while alive gave us much good advice. But enough of him: he will not be coming back from the dead. We will die in our turn, since death comes to all. Instead, let us choose somebody else if there is agreement, someone who is trustworthy, shrewd and commands respect, who is able to give us advice in our best interests, and who can wield a sword if need be to help us defend ourselves against Turkish attack. That is what the pope [Miles] commanded us to do when we set out by ship for here:³⁰ that if the envoy to whom he had given his mandate died and was buried on the expedition, we should choose another found by experience to be trustworthy, shrewd and of great sanctity to assume the lead of our army. [The pope] further said that he would give him the power as part of his high office that anyone whose sins he forgave would be as innocent as someone who has just been baptised.'³¹ All the barons in the army agreed. Their gaze fell on the bishop of Mautran, and he was publicly elected.³² Then they had him called in and broke the news to him that he had been chosen by the entire leadership. 'It shall be as your lordships wish,' said the bishop. And by God! He went on to give a great deal of excellent advice before the wonderful city of Jerusalem. The barons left and made their way to their lodgings.

Now I am going to move on from those who gained their wish and tell you what happened to the powerful king Corbaran. He stayed in a dark valley all night with a quarter of his kings, all sunk in profound grief. When dawn broke the following day, they sewed Brohadas inside a deer hide and lashed him on the back of a Syrian mule. They set off towards the Black Mountain, bypassing the powerful stronghold of Edessa and going nowhere near it, taking another route. They forded the Euphrates with no boat or galley. My lords, this river is one very dear to God, blessed and consecrated by his own hand. It comes from Paradise – this is absolutely true – from where God ejected Adam as a result of his own folly

³⁰ There is no record of a Pope Milon at this time; the pope was of course Urban II.

³¹ Lit. 'had the alb removed after baptism'.

³² It is not obvious who this is. Arnulf of Chocques was elected in August 1099 as patriarch of Jerusalem (Asbridge, *First Crusade*, p. 322), but there is no record of the army electing any spiritual leader before then to replace Adhemar.

in eating the fruit forbidden to him and which the tempter brought him to eat. On that same day they were bound in great sorrow, and went to Hell when they died.

Differing approaches between mss A and B

Laisses 78–83

These laisses are a good example of the way in which manuscript B pads the version of manuscript A. Compare them with the corresponding laisses 68–73. The cowardice of Stephen of Blois was a theme that could be expanded at will and would have played well with an audience.

78. Oliver of Jussi spoke before everyone. ‘Listen to what I have to say, my lords and noble valiant knights! [Our] glittering [shields] are still intact. We are not wounded in front or behind; our mailed hauberks have not been ripped; the strong and sharp spears are not broken; and we are not injured in front or behind. If we go fleeing back to the army of God the Bavarians and Germans will laugh us to scorn, not to mention Godfrey of Bouillon and Robert of Normandy. We are much better off mounting a massed attack. I know full well we cannot rely on Stephen, but in the name of God the Almighty let’s go and attack the Turks! May God grant us victory today over the infidel race!’ With these words they broke through the ranks of their cowardly opponents. If you had been there you would have seen an amazingly vicious battle. Baldwin Cauderon wielded a sharp sword. The noble Drogo of Nesle with Baldwin of Ghent, lord Guy of Porsese the valiant-hearted, Hugh of St-Pol and his son Enguerrand and the grey-haired lord Guy of Peronne cut their way through the mêlée with steel swords. Lord Stephen of Blois led from the front. When he saw how hard-fought the battle was, he called on God the redeeming Father. [Sweat] streamed from his head down over his shoulders, and his limbs trembled with anguish and fear. ‘Listen [to me] God, Almighty Father!’ he said. ‘I think I should make for Tancred of Apulia. Godfrey of Bouillon must think I am a child to send me down into this ravine. If I stay here another moment, I shall never get out alive.’ He flung down the standard, turned and fled. Now may God protect the Franks who stayed: if He does not there is no way they will get out alive. The Turks attacked them, shooting from their bows of horn. The arrows shower down on our men like rain from the clouds. When the Franks saw the pressure the Turks were putting on them, Enguerrand rode out from the ranks on his charger and struck Butor on his shining helmet, slashing right down to the teeth. He shouted out, ‘Montjoie! Strike hard, my lords! We cannot count on any more help from Stephen.’

79. The battle swirled around the hill of Civetot. Richenés looked down the valley and saw the French standard flung down on the ground. He said to his men: ‘My noble and honoured lords, let us go and avenge Hisdent of noble memory.’ They promptly did. While the fortunate race of the Franks ... [manuscript reading

unclear]. Imagine the scene: so many lances shattered, shields broken, gilded hauberks, so many chests and fists and heads slashed open, so many heavy blows struck with lance and sword, so many Turks and pagans sprawled gaping, so many chestnut-quartered horses fleeing towards the mountain with their saddles twisted round. But there were too many infidels: large numbers of our men were killed and beheaded, and the green grass dripped with their blood. Meanwhile Stephen fled at full gallop as far as his horse would carry him. When the Franks from the blessed land saw the standard flung down, they halted. 'My noble and honoured companions,' said Baldwin of Ghent, 'Lord Stephen of Blois has demoralised our side. He has passed our death sentence, be sure of it. But I would rather have my head cut off in victory and win the battle than die while fleeing: that is true shame.'

80. The count of Nesle responded: 'Do not lose heart! Let us all strike out with burnished swords. We will pit our limbs and lives against the Turks. Personally I would rather have my head cut off in victory than die in flight: that would be shameful. I do not want anyone slandering my memory after I am dead. But I realise full well our force is betrayed. Lord Stephen of Blois has failed in his charge and signed its death warrant.'

'This is a sorry state of affairs,' said Hugh of St-Pol.

'But not worth fretting over!' responded his son Enguerrand. 'As long as we are still in one piece, let's not hang back: on the contrary, let's throw ourselves into the fray body and soul. When the Franks from the joyous land do get here and see the carnage we have inflicted on the pagans and find us lying dead amidst pagan corpses, not one noble knight will be able to snigger at what we have achieved.' At this they rode out in a tight column onto the meadow. The Turks, no friends of theirs, swooped down on them and killed 30 in the attack. The barons were appalled to see this but unable to go to their assistance because of the sheer weight of pagan numbers. However Lord Drogo of Nesle and Lord Guy rallied them, crying 'Montjoie! Help us, O Holy Sepulchre! God, be with us today! Blessed Lady Mary, crowned queen and beloved of God, you who carried Him in your womb and gave birth without pain – as we believe in you, come to our aid now against these pagan bastards who are pressing us so hard.' At this they rallied their forces in the wasteland. Now those villainous bastards will meet a sticky end. However the first to suffer were the Hungarians, who lost more than 1500 men.

81. Even though the Turks began shooting with their Turkish bows, the French nobility were completely undaunted (lit. did not give two peas for them). On the contrary they turned back towards them as soon as they could wheel round, slashing off their heads with their Viennese swords, cutting through their mail coifs and the panels of their gilded hauberks, plunging shining blade and shaft into their bodies.³³ But there were simply too many of the accursed cowards, 43 of them against one of ours. The din of the defence put up by swordblows was enormous, and the noble duke Godfrey heard it from the other side of the mountain. 'Strike in the name of the Holy Sepulchre, Franks!' he cried.

³³ As often, 'Viennese' for the sake of the rhyme.

82. ‘Listen to me!’ said Tancred the Apulian. ‘I heard a huge din over beyond that mountain.’

‘I hear it too,’ said Duke Godfrey. I think it must be the Persian and Arab infidels, those proud races nobody loves, least of all God.’

‘Come on barons! Let’s go!’ said Robert of Flanders.

‘Here I am – follow me,’ said Hugh of Vermandois, ‘Anselm of Ribemont, Ralph of Beauvais, Gerard of Gornai and Walter of Cerisy are to stay with the army and not budge from this spot.’

‘We are ready for anything!’ the counts replied. With that the Franks got under way: they left, jostling and spurring their horses on as fast as they could. They happened on Stephen [of Blois], in a state of bemused confusion. ‘How do you read the situation?’ said Count Robert. ‘We are completely undone,’ replied Count Stephen. At these words the noble knights exchanged glances, seeing the standard flung down on the ground. Count Robert of Flanders and Thomas of Coucy addressed Stephen with measured determination: ‘Where did Count Drogo of Nesle go? What about Baldwin of Ghent or Bernard of Vesi?’³⁴

‘I shall tell it as it is,’ said Count Stephen. ‘They are fighting it out with hordes of Arabs.’ The count of Flanders did not hang around when he heard this. He immediately urged his horse forward and picked up the standard that Stephen had thrown down: lifting it up, he raised it and brandished it, then went straight back into battle as a brave man should. Now may the Lord who never lies come to his aid! The Persians and Arabs are in for a hard day.

83. There was slaughter left, right and centre at the hill of Civetot. The Persians and Slavs were retreating in droves, hard pressed by the Franks who raged like lions. By God! Imagine the sight of Drogo of Nesle, Baldwin of Ghent, Guy of Porsese, Enguerrand of St-Pol and his father Hugh, Gerald of Gournai and Baldwin Cauderon all inflicting massive slaughter with their steel swords. The pagans hemmed them in in front and behind, shooting them with Turkish arrows and creating an almighty row so that you could hear the noise a good league off. But the black race were too numerous: without help they will have no protection against death and captivity for all. Enguerrand of St-Pol went to strike Corbon, slicing off his head beneath the chin with his sword. His father Hugh chased after Rubion and slashed him in two down to the lungs. Lord Guy of Porsese killed Matefelon; Baldwin of Ghent killed King Escorpion, Malakin of Nicaea and his brother Colon

Variants from other manuscript traditions

Both Nelson and Duparc-Quioc give a number of interpolations found in other manuscripts of the text. We translate here a selection of these to illustrate how the text varies between manuscript traditions.

³⁴ Not identified, but may be a garbled version of Bernard of St-Valéry.

Different beginning to the text

Arsénal 3139, B.N. fr.12569 and B. Mus.Add.36615 (F, G and L in Duparc-Quioc; G, E, and I in Nelson) lack the first 14 laisses. They start instead with this laisse, which in the remaining manuscripts except Turin and Laon is at the end of the Enfances Godefroi. The laisse summarises the entire central trilogy of the OFCC. The text here is Interpolation I of Duparc-Quioc.

Now listen, my noble and honoured lords: listen to a song that is bound to be well received. This is where the famous story starts. It was in the adventures described in it that crosses were taken and a great army assembled. When the news became known over the whole country, Lord Peter the Hermit with his grizzled beard was the first to draw up his army. Once assembled it proved to be a large force, and he thought he could conquer the lands as far as the Dead Sea. However, it lacked princes to give it a lead, and ended up completely routed, defeated and dead. The bishop of Forez was taken in the battle and so was Harpin of Bourges – this was completely true – and the renowned Richard of Caumont who would go on to fight two Turks nominated as champions with his sharp sword. When the barons of France were told what had happened, they wrung their hands and wept bitterly. Then they drew up their own army, with more than 100,000 well-armed soldiers and too many rank and file to count. This proud and redoubtable army set off overseas. The noble Duke Godfrey rode out in front with Lord Hugh the Maisné up hill and down dale. The whole land was taken and fell: Nicaea, Antioch where the army suffered, and then the famous stronghold of Jerusalem where Christianity was restored and raised up again. Godfrey, whose reputation was great, was elected king there by his noble compatriots. However, he had no wish to wear a crown on his head and gave the honour to his brother Baldwin, who thus became king and lord for the rest of his life. My lords, you have heard what this poem will be about: I shall tell you more – listen and see what you think.

The meeting of Peter the Hermit and King Philip of France

These three laisses describe the meeting of Peter the Hermit and King Philip of France. They are found only in F, G and L (Duparc-Quioc) or G, E, and I (Nelson) after v.859 of B. They move the text back towards the accepted Benedictine view of the importance of the council of Clermont and away from manuscript A's heavy emphasis on the role of Peter. The text is translated from Appendix I in Nelson; it is also given by Duparc-Quioc as Interpolation III.

1. Lord Peter the Hermit came back from Rome riding a large and well saddled donkey and bringing 50 companions with him. He rode through Lombardy carrying the seal of the pope. In Apulia and Calabria he preached to the masses. When they heard the news about the infidels and how the priest was killed in the middle of

celebrating Mass, all of them were upset and angry, with those who heard him reduced to weeping in sympathy. In eight days he gave out a good 100,000 crosses. Then he greeted them and took his leave. He made his way through Lombardy and up and over the mountains. He stayed for a short time in Berry and Auvergne, getting their inhabitants to take the cross and commending them all to Lord God in glory. Then Lord Peter pressed on over paved roads all the way to the noble city of Paris. There were to be found the flower of the French nobility. Lord Peter the Hermit shouted at the top of his voice: 'Hearken to me, noble king of France. It is time for you to take pity on the true Sepulchre of God, where His body was laid, and which is now being abominably treated by the Saracens – they have committed the ultimate shame by turning it into a stable.' Count Hugh [of Vermandois] was in despair at hearing this. Meanwhile the noble King Philip rose to his feet and said to Peter the Hermit: 'So is it true that the pagans have defeated and killed our men even though there were so many brave fighters among them?' 'My lord,' replied Peter, 'by the God of majesty, there is not to the best of my knowledge a baron or prince left whom the pagans did not kill or mortally injure. Moreover some 30,000 men have been taken captive and led away, taken to be imprisoned in the furthest reaches of the land of the pagans. Now the pope orders you to come to their assistance and deliver the true Holy Sepulchre from the pagans. Anyone who dies for God will be crowned and a bed prepared for him in heaven among the angels.' 'Ah God,' said the king, 'may you be worshipped for this!' 'My noble brother,' he said to Count Hugh, 'you are going to be the one to go.'

2. Peter of the Hermitage then spoke to the king. 'My lord and noble king of France, hear my words! I am Peter the Hermit and I made this journey to avenge the Lord God for the terrible shame inflicted on Him by the people of the savage lands. They hold the city of Jerusalem as their inheritance. I wanted to challenge them and the consequences were terrible: I lost my land and all my inheritance, I saw some dying before me on the grass and others taken off by force into captivity. I fled all alone across fields and through woods until I reached Rome, filled with misery and rage. I told the pope just how angry and upset I was; he should send letters to you and your nobility, imploring you and ordering you by your Christian faith to send all those who had done homage to you and all those who held their inheritance from you, counts and dukes and princes and those you honour. Once they are assembled, each with his followers, the pope himself will assume leadership. He will speak first to express his resolve; and he will pardon all those who make this journey for the sins they have committed since they were small children.' 'This is wise counsel,' replied the king of France. 'I think it is a good way forward and my will is that we should follow it.'

3. The king sent out sealed letters to summon his men, princes and dukes and counts and provosts of castles, his friends, his relatives and his close associates. They were not to allow any problem or illness to hinder them from coming together with their main adherents. A day was fixed near one of his castles: Clermont in the Auvergne, a well-supplied and pleasant location. The pope in Rome swiftly put on his regalia and left the city with twelve cardinals. He stayed in one city after

another, pausing in his journey neither at mountain nor castle. He rode down the wide royal roads in Lombardy until he entered France, to his delight and with great pleasure. He made his way up hill and down dale towards Clermont until he saw the castle. He ordered his seneschals to go and seek out the most palatial apartments in the city and see to it that they were richly equipped. He made an entrance into the city in front of all its inhabitants. Dismounting at the foot of the steps up to the hall, he was led up to the main galleries. The king of France arrived with the royal forces and bishops, archbishops and the common people. Not a single one, old or young, had stayed behind in France. The noble and loyal Hugh the Maisné was there; Robert count of Flanders and Robert of Maine; Raymond of St-Gilles and Stephen of Blois; Godfrey of Bouillon and the handsome Eustace and his brother Baldwin, who was still very young. With them was William the Carpenter and one of the main leaders, the bishop of Le Puy. The numbers of others there could not be counted. They spent that night rejoicing together. When they had ensured the horses had received enough to eat, they slept happily and contentedly that night until the sun rose the following morning. The pope got up with all his cardinals, the king and the counts, each in his own lodgings; then they made their way to the cathedral. It was a splendid service, with the pope himself singing the Mass among them. When he had taken off his regalia, they came out of the cathedral because there were so many people, high and low, that they could not hear the words and the counsels of the pope. The nobles, experienced and raw recruits alike, left the castle, the pope at their head followed by the king of France and his high nobility, then the others young and old.

Enguerrand attacks Garsion

This passage occurs only in Berne 320 (ms E for Duparc-Quioc, F for Nelson). It follows v.7983 of B. It is a revision of laisses 277–80 relating the rescue of Enguerrand and, uniquely here, the wounding of Garsion. The text here is Appendix V of Nelson, which we translate here; Duparc-Quioc gives part of the text as Interpolations VIII and IX.

1. Enguerrand was on foot in the midst of the Arabs, grasping his sword with both hands and in a sticky situation. Picture his father Hugh along with 5,000 mailed soldiers. When he reached his son, he did not bat an eyelid but dismounted and stood shoulder to shoulder with him. Heavy blows were raining down on Enguerrand from maces, darts and fine burnished swords. However the duke of Bouillon loomed up between them, shouting at the top of his voice to ensure he was heard properly: ‘Listen to me, noble Christians, and you, King Amaris. May anyone who does not strike hard at these pathetic forces making a stand here be shamed by God!’ He drew his sword and slaughtered Malferis, Estorgan of Valterne and Gondran the Arab, Danebourc of Averse and Bruiant of Lentis. Meanwhile Lord Hugh the Maisné killed their captain; Tancred struck Falsaron of

Gahis dead, and Bohemond [killed] Butor from the kingdom of the Ganges. Count Robert of Flanders killed two of their Persians. Garsion was struck in the middle of the chest with an iron mace, sending him staggering. The pagans picked him up, grabbed him by the nasal [of his helmet] and carried him off on a shield to a vaulted palace. The pagans turned and fled: picture their discomfiture for yourself. They did not stop until they reached the palace.

2. The pagans, black villains, were in disarray. They carried Garsion up into his keep and laid him down on a quilt. They put him in the care of a doctor called Albrinon. Then the infidels fled – much good it would do them – straight to the main citadel to seek its protection, hotly pursued by the noble French barons. There was a steep cliff and a plunging ravine at the Esquinart Gate, which had been made by Noiron the infernal. The pagans tumbled down from it, suffering greatly in the process: anyone who fell from the cliff would not recover in a hurry. [Nevertheless] the pagans plunged from it without seeking quarter. Ten thousand made their way up to Garsion's palace and shut its doors and the access to the bridge at the top of the hill. Inside they had plenty of arms in abundance; they laid in all kinds of supplies, bread, wine, meat and good venison. They had no fear of assault [lit. did not give a button for] because of the height of the rock on all sides: it was lofty, daunting and as sharp as a large arrow. There was no way the Franks could get in no matter how they attacked.

3. The citadel was very strong, with a circuit of high walls. Opposite on a rock an archer was positioned, with the front gate (crafted by devils) in his sights. The pagans were sent toppling down in confusion; anyone who fell down the cliff had no hope of recovery, his body damaged beyond repair. That day 13,000 Turks fell to their deaths. Up [in the citadel] were Saracens (may God be their downfall!). They had plenty of food to eat, bread and wine, and were well supplied with weapons – scythe-shaped weapons, steel crossbow bolts, large bolts and goads and javelins they could throw. They had enough to guard against a year's siege provided they were determined to defend themselves and the food did not run out. The Franks made their way back to the city below and had all the women and children beheaded if they refused to be baptised into the faith. You might have heard shouting and yelling for Mohammed: 'Sir, Lord Tervagant, come to our aid! We are being cruelly tortured for your sake!' Garsion was up in the galleries of his rich palace. He could see the slaughter being inflicted throughout Antioch, his people being killed and him powerless to help them. He was so upset as to be beside himself. 'Alas, Mohammed,' he said, 'may God be your downfall. You should not be dozing or asleep; instead you ought to be avenging me against these losers who have deprived me of the land I rule.' In a furious temper Garsion ran to Mohammed and seized him, then flung him down out of a window. The camp followers below saw him smash apart on the ground. They clustered round with steel picks, smashing in his head and breaking his neck. The pagans put on an extravagant show of grief: imagine hair being torn and clawed, fists slammed into each other and the outpouring of misery. 'Lord King Garsion, you will suffer for this – you have destroyed our god Mohammed in front of our eyes!'

'Shut up, you cowardly sons of whores,' said Garsion. 'If he could have stirred himself to wake up for us, would he have had to put up with being finished off in this way? He ought to have put some effort into helping us. Accursed be a god who can sleep so much that he does not come and help his men when they need it.' [Meanwhile] our Franks went exploring the city. Anyone who wanted a house or palace or cellar could take his pick without paying a penny. They found bezants, silver and pure gold, fabrics and silks of great value, rich treasures and good fast warhorses: nobody could estimate the value of their haul. That night you might have seen our Franks taking their ease and eating the food they so desperately craved.

4. Antioch was taken as I have described. All the dead Saracens were carried out and the roads cleaned and cleared; the dead Saracens were heaped up and set on fire to be burned and destroyed. When the lords and nobles had done all this, they had the tents outside the city struck and bundled up, and all the equipment brought into the city. All the sick people they could find were carried into Antioch on litters and doctors sent to the wounded to relieve their pain. The booty they had taken was shared out equally, split and handed over to each according to who he was. The good bishop of Le Puy went to sing Mass and the nobles went to listen in the great cathedral of St Peter that had been desecrated by the Turks and where the pagans had stabled their horses. The Franks had it cleaned and cleared out; the altar was mended and draped in rich cloths, the church reconsecrated and completely restored to its proper state, crucifixes repaired and images cast. The bishop of Le Puy preached a sermon as follows: 'My lords, you most certainly owe thanks and praise to God, who has granted you the conquest of this great city. Now we need to get the gates mended and rehung, the towers repaired and the mangonels ready because the Saracens are already at the valley of the Escler. Nobody can guess the numbers they bring with them, but I have heard reports that it may number one million.'³⁵ 'God save you, my lord,' replied the barons. That night the lords and nobles celebrated. But the Turks in the citadel made their lives very difficult. They attacked our people every day, flinging things down on them and making ten sallies out into the town each day to inflict damage. The Franks hastened to push them back into the citadel; then they had a stone wall constructed to stop the Turks making further sallies out into the city.

The negotiations with the Turks in the citadel

These laisses are unique to Berne 320 (E in Duparc-Quioc, F in Nelson). They form a link passage between the end of A and the start of the Chétifs. The text is

³⁵ Adhemar plays the role of the warrior bishop like Turpin.

Appendix IX in Nelson, which we translate here. Duparc-Quioc gives these as Interpolations XII, XIII and XIV.

1. 'You will indeed,' said the bishop of Le Puy Bohemond of Sicily shouted out to Garsion: 'Emir, believe in God and renounce Mohammed – then you can have back Antioch and your entire kingdom.' 'Shut up sir!' replied the emir. 'Even if I were to be burnt to a crisp I wouldn't do that. However I am seeking leave from you all to leave in defeat for another part of my lands.' 'With God's blessing,' replied the princes. Garsion turned and left on his Aragonese mule, followed by some 150 Turks: they spurred off towards the Black Mountain. Garsion stopped next to a black cliff. He looked back at Antioch and trembled all over. Tears streamed from his eyes down onto his padded cotton coat. He fainted four times in succession, toppling from his mule down onto the sand.

2. Garsion of Antioch slid to the ground in a dead faint. Once he had picked himself up again, he looked back at Antioch, where he had been crowned king. He dropped down dead from sheer grief.³⁶ His soul did not hang around. You can imagine how horrified his men were at the sight. Each one leapt on his horse, turned and fled, leaving the emir Garsion dead where he fell. An Armenian who had climbed the mountain found Garsion lifeless, and cut off his head with the sword he carried. The Armenian took the head and turned tail; he did not rest until he had reached Antioch, where he presented the head to the barons and princes. 'My lords,' he said to them, 'listen to what I have to say. This is the head of the emir who gave you so much trouble.' 'In faith,' replied Bohemond, 'you have made a bad mistake. This man was under safe conduct from all our barons. If you have killed him, you will be torn limb from limb.' 'I am telling the truth, my lord,' said the Armenian. 'Please believe me: it was not I who killed him. I will prove it by ordeal before your eyes, by fire or water or however you choose.' An ordeal by fire was duly prepared, with the flames soon roaring. Once he had been blessed, the Armenian walked into it. He suffered no harm at all and came out safe and sound. Barons and people alike declared him innocent.³⁷ They went into Antioch. The palaces were handed over to Bohemond of Sicily, who was confirmed in their possession. Our Lord was served and honoured: masses were sung and the Host consecrated; the churches repaired and the basilicas restored; and, as you can imagine, our Christians revitalised.

3. Antioch was taken and its palaces seized. The territory was handed over to the good duke Bohemond. The rank and file crowded in huge numbers into the vaulted palace: [however] it contained a large lion, fur on end, which injured and killed a large number of our people. The news reached our best barons. Bohemond was deeply upset when he heard; he grabbed his weapons immediately and swore by

³⁶ Yet another fate for Garsion, whose end was clearly a source of some interest for the various authors of the *Antioche*.

³⁷ A variant of the ordeal by fire undergone by Peter Bartholomew to prove the authenticity of the Lance.

Lord God who was hanged on the Cross that if he did not kill the lion he would surrender the territory. Sword gripped in his right hand, he went out ready for the challenge and climbed up the tower built on bare rock. Now may God, King of Paradise, watch over him, because before he comes down again he will suffer considerably.

4. Bohemond of Sicily climbed up to the keep. The princes and barons followed him; however, he asked them all in terms of eminent reasonableness not to help him fight the lion. The noble lord turned and left them, spoiling for the challenge, and did not stop until he was in the tower. The lion came out of the hall towards him. It had an iron chain round its neck. It had eaten nothing at all for three days and rushed on Bohemond, jaws gaping wide. May God watch over him by His most holy Name!

5. Bohemond of Sicily was in the luxurious palace. Picture the lion unchained and making its way towards him. It ran towards him and its jaws gaped wide: it had eaten nothing for the last three days. The duke, not at all scared, went forward to meet it. However the savage lion was the first to attack. It hooked its claws into Bohemond's mailed hauberk and knocked him to the ground regardless of his intentions. When Duke Bohemond felt himself being attacked, he struck the lion with his steel sword. The lion was furious. It swallowed the duke's right leg all the way up to the fastening of his sword belt, and would have bitten his thighbone right off his body if Duke Bohemond had not plunged his sword in next to its thigh so that he ripped and sliced all the way to its chest, flinging the lion dead beside him. Then he got proudly to his feet and cut off its head with his sharp sword.³⁸ Our barons were watching, overjoyed. The news went right round the city of how Bohemond had stabbed the lion, and the Christians thanked Lord God fervently. After eleven days in Antioch the good bishop of Le Puy fell ill. He lay ill for only a very short time – this is reckoned to be true – before Death took him and God came down to visit him and take his soul up to heaven. Before then he had asked and commanded our barons to lay his body in the basilica of St Peter. Our barons did so, mindful of his wish. They laid the bishop of Le Puy to rest in the same place where they had found the Lance of Our Lord. Our princes were very sorry at his loss and missed him greatly. They appointed the bishop of Mautran in his place, then all our barons came together in council. They agreed by common consent and decreed that they would leave the city in the charge of Datien because he had surrendered it to them. Poor and rich agreed; they handed the territory and the kingdom over to Datien, while Bohemond stationed his guards in the main citadel.³⁹ Horns were blown throughout the Christian army, and [the soldiers] were asked and requested to prepare themselves for the journey to Jerusalem.

³⁸ Possible symbolic resonance: the lion sometimes represented the devil (cf. 1 Peter 5: 8), although the *Bestiary* in Bodley 764 stresses the lion as Christian symbol: *Bestiary: Ms Bodley 764*, trans. Richard Barber (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 24–5. AA describes the crusaders of 1101 killing one of the Byzantine emperor's tame lions (pp. 590–1).

³⁹ Not found in any other source.

The Christians were overjoyed at the message. They got under way on a Monday morning, with all their provisions lashed onto pack animals. They all rode along together, although many of them were to suffer. Before they take Jerusalem by force, many Saracens will have converted to their faith, many castles will have fallen and many walls sent toppling. At this point I shall say no more about them until we return to the story on another occasion. I shall describe how things had been going with Corbaran. He had taken a route through dark valleys, taking with him only two kings from his household and carrying the decapitated Brohadas.

6. Corbaran fled along beside a pinnacled cliff, his sword drawn in his right hand. He was quite pale with discontent and anger, looking for all the world like a man who had had a bad fright. He wrung his hands and twisted his beard; indeed he would have plunged his tempered sword into his body had not the king of Nubia seized his hands.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The king of Nubia appears in the *Destruction de Rome*, where he is killed by Savaris: vv. 853–8.

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Appendix 2

Table of Rhymes

Laisse and rhyme		
1: -er	47: -és	93: -ans
2: -er	48: -ate	94: -ier
3: -on	49: -egne	95: -é
4: -ist	50: -on	96: -ir
5: -ie	51: -és	97: -aigne
6: -er	52: -ie	98: -on
7: -ee	53: -is	99: -és
8: -és	54: -ent	100: -ie
9: -és	55: -esse	101: -erge
10: -on	56: -el	102: -on
11: -ent	57: -in	103: -és
12: -ie	58: -on	104: -ans
13: -a	59: -ee	105: -is
14: -ente	60: -art	106: -é
15: -on	61: -ois	107: -is
16: -és	62: -on	108: -é
17: -is	63: -ier	109: -ie
18: -ie	64: -ois	110: -é
19: - ans	65: -ie	111: -on
20: -ee	66: -ant	112: -és
21: -ier	67: - on	113: -ie
22: -er	68: -ant	114: -é
23: -ant	69: -ee	115: -iés
24: -ie	70: -ie	116: -és
25: -is	71: -ois	117: -ie
26: -ant	72: -i	118: -on
27: -on	73: -on	119: -ant
28: -a	74: -ant	120: -é
29: -és	75: -ie	121: -ans
30: -é	76: -on	122: -is
31: -ie	77: -é	123: -ant
32: -i	78: -ie	124: -on
33: -ee	79: -iés	125: -é
34: -is	80: -és	126: -on
35: -ons	81: -or	127: -ant
36: -ee	82: -és	128: -a
37: ees	83: -on	129: -on
38: -és	84: -é	130: -é
39: -ie	85: -és	131: -aigne
40: -a	86: -ie	132: -ie
41: -ans	87: -ant	133: -on
42: -és	88: -ié	134: -i
43: -ans	89: -ue	135: -aus
44: -ier	90: -er	136: -ie
45: -é	91: -eue	137: -ant
46: -ans	92: -ant	138: -ont

Laisse and rhyme		
139: -al	189: -és	239: -és
140: -ee	190: -on	240: -oit
141: -is	191: -ir	241: -é
142: -és	192: -é	242: -on
143: -on	193: -as	243: -ent
144: -ier	194: -ee	244: -ant
145: -é	195: -és	245: -és
146: -ie	196: -ier	246: -ie
147: -ier	197: -ue	247: -al
148: -aille	198: -er	248: -ee
149: -ier	199: -al	249: -ant
150: -ee	200: -ant	250: -er
151: -ie	201: -ier	251: -a
152: -ant	202: -us	252: -ir
153: -ent	203: -és	253: -on
154: -erre	204: -is	254: -ant
155: -is	205: -er	255: -or
156: -i	206: -és	256: -ie
157: -is	207: -ie	257: -é
158: -er	208: -é	258: -ie
159: -ons	209: -ie	259: -és
160: -és	210: -os (ous)	260: -ier
161: -on	211: -ans	261: -a
162: -ee	212: -ee	262: -is
163: -a	213: -ant	263: -ier
164: -eis	214: -a	264: -on
165: -ant	215: -is	265: -er
166: -ant	216: -as	266: -oir
167: -er	217: -an	267: -ee
168: -is	218: -ant	268: -ant
169: -és	219: -ier	269: -ee
170: -or	220: -ant	270: -er
171: -ire	221: -ent	271: -é
172: -ent	222: -ie	272: -ant
173: -ant	223: -a	273: -ier
174: -é	224: -er	274: -ee
175: -és	225: -ee	275: -ent
176: -ons	226: -ie	276: -is
177: -a	227: -er	277: -er
178: -és	228: -ant	278: -és
179: -ie	229: -is	279: -ee
180: -ent	230: -ant	280: -is
181: -ans	231: -é	281: -ent
182: -u	232: -ent	282: -oir
183: -é	233: -on	283: -é
184: -is	234: -er	284: -ier
185: -on	235: -oit	285: -ie
186: -ier	236: -ier	286: -és
187: -er	237: -er	287: -ie
188: -ir	238: -ant (-ent)	288: -é

Laisse and rhyme		
289: -i	321: -é	353: -ue
290: -er	322: -er	354: -ant
291: -és	323: -als	355: -on
292: -ent	324: -is	356: -ons
293: -é	325: -ié	357: -ee
294: -ent	326: -és	358: -ier
295: -ier	327: -ir	359: -er
296: -é	328: -ees	360: -ant
297: -ie	329: -é	361: -ais
298: -ent	330: -age	362: -és
299: -er	331: -és	363: -er
300: -on	332: -er	364: -on
301: -ie	333: -ee	365: -ee
302: -és	334: -us	366: -és
303: -ier	335: -ois	367: -é
304: -is	336: -és	368: -és
305: -ee	337: -ans	369: -ier
306: -és	338: -ant	370: * -ier
307: -ons	339: -on	
308: -er	340: -ir	371: -e
309: -ie	341: -us	372: -is
310: -ent	342: -is	373: -age
311: -is	343: -ie	374: -ee
312: -ier	344: -art	
313: -és	345: -an	
314: -ee	346: -ie	
315: -ie	347: -as	
316: -us	348: -i	
317: -iers	349: -on	
318: -on	350: -ee	
319: -in	351: -ier	
320: -ans	352: -is	

* Laisse 370 is assonanced.

The 'douze couplets': table of assonances

1: -ons (-or, -os)	5: -ee	9: -an
2: -ie (-irent, -ises, -ile)	6: -i	10: -i
3: -a	7: -ier (-iens, iel)	11: -ai
4: -i	8: -i	12: -i

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Appendix 3

Dramatis Personae

In the list below, entirely fictional characters are *italicized*. However, it should be recognized that the line drawn between history and fiction is an arbitrary one: in the *Antioche*, historical characters were frequently credited with fictional exploits. We offer brief identification of known historical characters, with references to fuller accounts. These will usually be found in Alan V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: a dynastic history 1099–1115* (Oxford: Prosopographia et Genealogica, 2000) [Murray] and/or Jonathan Riley Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) [cited as R-S]. Some characters, particularly Saracens, are shared with other *chansons de geste*: we have pointed out parallels. Our main source of reference for non-historical characters has been André Moisan, *Répertoire des noms propres de personnes et de lieux cités dans les chansons de geste francaises et les oeuvres étrangères dérivées* (5 vols, Geneva, 1986) [Moisan].

References to the *Chanson d'Antioche* are by laisse number(s); the twelve couplets are referred to as TC 1–12. References to other *chansons de geste* are by line number.

A

Aaron: brother of Moses; mentioned in prayer, 235.

abbot of Fécamp: at Civetot, 31. Existed as a historical figure, but unlikely to have been on the Crusade. See G.M. Myers, 'Les 'chétifs': étude sur le development de la chanson', *R*, 105 (1984), 63–87 at pp. 77–9.

Abraham, king: receives Christian captives at Civetot, 31. Saracen leader also found in the 'chétifs', e.g. vv. 1566, 1744, and in the *Jérusalem*, v. 2791.

Abraham: Old Testament figure; garden mentioned, 135.

Acéré: son of Garsion; killed by Enguerrand of St-Pol on arrival at Antioch, 120. Not recorded elsewhere.

Achard (castellan) of Montmerle: at siege of Antioch, 134; in battle of Antioch, 355. Burgundian (dépt. Ain); recorded in all the historical sources; a surviving charter records his donation of property to Cluny to finance his crusade (R-S, p. 197). He was killed at Jaffa while leading a company of knights from Raymond IV's contingent. Intriguingly the *GCU*, vol 1, chapters 186–8, gives him the credit for the genesis of the whole Crusade on a visit to the Holy Sepulchre: see *Canso*, pp. 41–2.

Adam, son of Michael: at Adhemar's funeral, TC 1. Found only in AA (R-S, p. 197).

Adam, the first man: mentioned laisses 4, 200, 223.

Adhemar, bishop of Le Puy: papal legate on the expedition. At Clermont, 35; sermon for Baldwin Cauderon, Guy of Porsese and Baldwin of Ghent, 76; at Dorylaeum, 98, 100, 101; encourages forces, 116, 118; asks who is on guard, 124; in siege with Raymond of St-Gilles, 132; messenger sent to him on foraging expedition, 160–61; watches Raimbaut Creton, 169; referred to, 209; sent rather puzzlingly to Baldwin at Edessa by the Byzantine emperor, 226; in council of war, 233; dispositions at Antioch, 264; gets priest of St Mary the Virgin to swear to his vision, 290; comments on vision of Peter Bartholomew, 291; suggests embassy to Corbaran, 294–5; suggests 3-day fast, 302; arms for battle, 306; tries to persuade other leaders to carry the Lance into battle then agrees to take it himself, 307–14; reminds others of need to guard city, 314; talks of martyrdom, 315; sprinkles Enguerrand's helmet with holy water, 322; leads out column, 323; pre-battle sermon, 329; urged to accept Corbaran's offer of ceasefire, 331; suggests attack on Rouge Lion, 335; in battle, 354–5; points out saints, 358; sermon, 366; death and burial in St Peter's at Antioch, TC 1-2. Leading figure on the Crusade and in all sources; R-S: *passim*. See J. H. and L. L. Hill, 'Contemporary Accounts and the Later Reputation of Adhémar, Bishop of Puy', *MH*, 9 (1955), pp. 30–38; J. A. Brundage, 'Adhemar of Puy: the Bishop and his Critics', *S*, 34 (1959), pp. 201–12. **Afaine:** guards tower at Antioch, 128. Saracen, not recorded elsewhere.

Agolans: Saracen king, killed at battle of Aspremont; quoted as example of heroism, 337 (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 116–17).

Aimeric Garaton: at siege of Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 232).

Aimery [of Narbonne]: as example of heroism, 363. Eponymous hero of a cycle of *chansons de geste*: grandson of Garin de Monglane, son of Ernaut de Beaulande, and father of seven sons including Beuve de Conmarchis and Guillaume d'Orange (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 123–4).

Aimon: Aimon, son of Renaut de Montauban, was father of Richard; ancestor of Robert of Normandy, 300.

Alan of Nantes: at siege of Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere.

Alexander (the Great): previous owner of sword, 177.

Alexius I Comnenus: emperor of Constantinople (1081–1118). Negotiations at Constantinople and hostility to crusaders, 38–47; referred to at Nicaea, 207; help sought by Baldwin, 226; fails to offer help to crusaders after briefing by Stephen of Blois, 285–87. His representations to Pope Urban II are generally accepted as the immediate occasion for the crusade.

Alis of Antioch, a royal king: killed by Raymond of St-Gilles, 160. Not recorded elsewhere.

Alis, from Veurne in Flanders: killed, 122. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 232).

almacour of Montire: killed by Rainalt Porcet, 171. Saracen leader. See also *Aumaçour* below.

Aloris: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Name given to a number of traitors in *chansons de geste* (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 138–9).

Amedelis: aide-de-camp of Corbaran and perennially accused of cowardice. Oversees banquet in front of ‘chétifs’, 28; envoy to ‘chétifs’, 30; warns Corbaran about Franks, 227; spying mission to Antioch, 302–4; dialogue with Corbaran as Christian forces march out, 315–28; last-minute embassy to Christians, 330–32; tells Corbaran he told him so, 352; kills William of Senlis, 352; in battle, 356. Probably based on Raymond of Aguiler’s Mirdalin, a noble refugee from Antioch who plays a similar role to Amedelis during Kerbogha’s siege of Antioch (RA, p. 62).

Andrew of Clermont: at Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 232).

Anselm of Ribemont: at Nicaea, 50; in battle alongside Enguerrand of St-Pol, 56; ordered to stand ground at Nicaea, 72; in first attack at Antioch, 176; in battle of Antioch, 355; death TC 8; referred to, TC 11. Anselm II of Ribemont, castellan of Bouchard and lord of Ostrevant and Valenciennes (dépt. Nord). Prominent crusader, whose death from a stone at Archas is recorded in all the historical sources; RC (pp. 124–5) and RA (pp. 88–9) describe him having a vision before his death. Gilo compares him to Hector and Cato (pp. 222–3). Author of two letters to Archbishop Manasses of Reims (Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae*, VIII, XV); R-S, p. 99.

Antelm of Avignon: arms Godfrey, 161. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 233).

Antiochus the Red: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Apollon: one of the ‘unholy trinity’ of pagan gods with Mohammed and Tervagant. Referred to in various combinations: 3, 57, 76, 138, 156, 163, 187, 263. See M. Zink, ‘Apollin’, *Mélanges René Louis: La chanson de geste et le mythe carolingien* (St-Père-sous-Vézelay, 1982), pp. 503–9.

apostolic caliph: help summoned by Garsion, 193; sultan of Persia writes to him, 213–14; at *pardon*, 221–23; Corbaran writes to him, 277. Fictional Saracen equivalent of the pope. Also called Caliph of Baghdad.

Arbulans: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Also in the ‘chétifs’, e.g. vv. 1232, 1496, 2997.

Arnold of Beauvais: see Ernols.

Asnes, king of: Saracen, killed by Rainalt Porcet, 173.

Auffrican: Saracen, summoned by sultan, 217. Former ruler of Jerusalem and first cousin of Cornumarant.

Augobier, brother of Caesar: referred to, 201. A common Saracen name in various spellings (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 561–2).

Aumaçour: Saracen general, see *Josué*. An Arabic title used as a name (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 138).

B

Baiars: Sansadoine's horse. Also the name of Renaut de Montauban's horse in the eponymous *chanson de geste*: *Renaut de Montauban: édition critique du manuscrit Douce*, ed. J. Thomas (Geneva, 1989). Found in numerous others such as *Girart de Roussillon*, vv. 4972, 5120; *passim* in *Maugis d'Aigremont*, ed. P. Vernay (Berne, 1980).

Baldwin Cauderon: at Nicaea, 50; seeks honour of first combat from Robert of Flanders, 52; kills Soliman's son Hisdent, 54; sent by Godfrey as minder for Stephen of Blois, 62; fights 68, 73; death and burial 75–6. Possibly from near Valenciennes. Also in AA and WT (R-S, p. 200).

Baldwin of Beauvais: one of the 'chétifs', 17–34. Hero of the central Sathanas episode of the 'chétifs'. Not recorded outside the OFCC (R-S, p. 233).

Baldwin of Boulogne, also Baldwin of Bouillon: at Nicaea, 50–61; side expedition to Edessa, 106–13; at siege of Antioch (ahistorically), 113; referred to, 209; attacked by Corbaran at Edessa on way to Antioch and seeks help from emperor, 225–7. Younger brother of Godfrey; first Latin count of Edessa (1097–1100); king of Jerusalem (1100–1118) (Murray, *passim*).

Baldwin of Ghent: at Nicaea, 50; sent by Godfrey as minder for Stephen of Blois, 62; rallies troops, 63–4; interrogates Stephen of Blois, 66–9; referred to, 72; head smashed by rock from petrary, 75; burial, 76. Lord of Aalst; also in AA and WT (R-S, p. 200).

Baldwin of Le Bourg (Bourcq): with Baldwin of Boulogne, 106; gives Turkish child fur coat, 230. Kinsman of Godfrey and Baldwin; count of Edessa (1100–1118); king of Jerusalem (1118–31) (Murray, pp. 185–6).

Baldwin of Mons: at Nicaea, 50; at battle of Antioch, 355. Count of Hainault; widely attested; †1098 in a Turkish ambush while on embassy to Constantinople (Murray, pp. 186–7; RS, p. 201).

Bares, Soliman's brother: referred to, 103. Possibly reminiscent of the demon Barré in the *Bataille de Loquifer*, ed. M. Barnett (Oxford, 1975), vv. 2265, 2300.

Bariagos: Saracen, at Persian court, 223. Not found elsewhere.

Barofle, Barolfe: Saracen, sent to find Baldwin and Tancred, 87; killed by William Fitzmarquis, 95. Found in various forms (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 212).

Barrabas: companion of Judas, 13.

Begon: relation of Chevalier au Cygne, 300.

Bernard, brother of Eudes: at Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere.

Bernard of Domeart or Domedart: kills Floart in battle at Nicaea, 60; in attack at Antioch, 120; leads out column with his father Walter and the St-Pols, 322. Son of Walter Bernard of Domedart (St-Valéry; dépt. Somme) (R-S, p. 202). Referred to as 'li delitous', 322; only the *Antioche* and AA refer to Bernard and Walter as from Domedart rather than St-Valéry.

Bernaus, emir: Saracen, guards tower at siege of Antioch, 135. Not found elsewhere.

Bertrand: as example of heroism, 363. Nephew of William of Orange; not recorded elsewhere.

Bieralies, Yaghi-Siyan's brother: referred to, 121. Not found elsewhere.

bishop of Albara: appointed and left to own devices, TC 3. The bishop was (historically) Peter of Narbonne: see *GF*, p. 75; B. Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States* (London, 1980), pp. 10–11.

bishop of Forez: a main character in the 'chétifs'; in Calabra's dungeons, 27–31; referred to, 278.

bishop of Le Puy: see Adhemar.

Bohemond of Sicily: son of Robert Guiscard and lord of Taranto. At Clermont, 35; at Constantinople, 39–44, at Nicaea, 51; at death of Baldwin Cauderon, 75; sought by Soliman, 87; splits from main force and attacked at Dorylaeum, 90–98; turns aside to Torsolt and Mamistra, 102, 109–10; at Antioch, 120; in first attack, 126; in siege, 128; on guard, 145; asks about castle, 152; leads foraging expedition, 158; encourages at river, 165–6; referred to by Rainalt Porcet, 173; negotiates truce with Garsion, 175–6; negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178–9, 181–3, 185–6; referred to, 190, 212; first approach by Datien, 232–33; dreams of fall of Antioch, 235; negotiates truce with Garsion, 236–7; further negotiations over fall of Antioch, 239–44; Godfrey less than convinced, 246–7; somewhat farcically fails to climb ladder into Antioch, 248–9; enters Antioch, 253; goes with Datien, 257–8; banner raised over Antioch, 259; at sack of Antioch, 261; dispositions at Antioch, 264; referred to, 279; lamented by Guy, 286; sets fire to city to spur Christians on, 293; head played for in chess, 299; takes command, 302; refuses to carry Lance into battle, 311; leads out column, 320; fights Corbaran, assisted by Godfrey and Hugh, 337–8; in battle, 355; example of heroism, 359; buys Garsion's head, 370; negotiations with emir of Antioch, 371–3; takes over, TC 1–2. One of the leaders of the crusade and military strategist. Ruler of Antioch although in captivity 1100–3; crusaded by Alexius in 1108 and forced to swear an oath of fealty; †1111. See R. B. Yewdale, *Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch* (Princeton, 1924); R-S, p. 202 and *passim*.

Braimans: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Killed by Charlemagne; found in numerous *chansons de geste*, e.g. *Maugis d'Aigremont*, v. 2684.

Bredalant: Saracen, killed by Enguerrand at fall of Antioch, 261.

Bricebalt, king: Saracen, killed by Godfrey at fall of Antioch, 263. Not found elsewhere, though similar to the Brifanbalz Josuanz of *Prise de Cordres et de Seville*, ed. O. Densusianu (Paris, 1896), e.g. vv. 2355, 2504.

Brohadas: the sultan of Persia's son by his senior wife. Volunteers to go with Corbaran, 212; in reprise of action, 274; killed by Godfrey and funeral, 347–51. Allowed to go with Corbaran by the sultan with the strict injunction to look after him: Brohadas' consequent death in battle provides the narrative motor for the 'chétifs'. See Introduction, chapter 1.

Brudalans: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356; killed, 365. Also found in *Fierabras, chanson de geste du XIIe siècle*, ed. M. le Person

(Paris, 2003), v. 1710; *Anseïs von Karthago*, ed. J. Alton (Tübingen, 1892), v. 3676.

Brumans: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Found in *Moniage Rainouart*, ed. G. A. Bertin (2 vols, Paris, 1973, 1988), vol. 2, v. 4270.

Brunamons, Brunamont: Saracen, guards tower at siege of Antioch, 137.

Butor, Soliman's son: at Civetot, 24; tries to comfort Soliman, 103, 105; kills Ouedon of Beauvais, 122; referred to, 125. Very frequent Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 273–5).

C

Caesar: evoked, 156. Usually used to denote emperor of Rome, but found on occasion as a Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 292).

Cahu: pagan god, 181. Familiar from other *chansons de geste*; Bancourt suggests the name means 'chaos' (*Musulmans*, vol. 1, p. 384).

Cahus: Saracen, accompanies Sansadoine, 190.

Calabra: Corbaran's mother; foretells help from 'chétifs', 33; arrival, 218; warns Corbaran, 224; dialogue with Corbaran, 277–83. She appears in *GF* and dependent texts, although not named. Her role is significantly expanded in the *Antioche*, and in the 'chétifs' she acts as jailer for the Christian knights. Her portrayal draws on stereotypes about both Saracen women and magic, and elderly women as magicians. See Introduction, chapter 3.

Calet of Mecca: Saracen, bisected by Godfrey in famous exploit, 162, which is referred to by (e.g.) RM (p. 133), AA (pp. 244–5), Gilo (pp. 122–3), BB (p. 50).

Caliph of Baghdad: see apostolic caliph.

Carcans of Syria: Saracen, guards tower at siege of Antioch, 132. Carcans de Rossie appears at *Jérusalem*, vv. 5730, 8520.

Carlton: Charlemagne, here as distant ancestor of Godfrey, 300.

Cartans: Saracen, at Antioch, 121.

Cassadran of Monbis: Saracen, torturer of Rainalt Porcet, 184; one of 'eight pagans accursed by God'. Not found elsewhere.

Cerberus, porter of Hell: constructed tower at Antioch, 263.

Cesaïre: with reference to sultan's tent, 201.

Champenois: Saracen, killed by Baldwin of Boulogne, 61.

Cherfron the Swabian: at Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 233).

Claras of Sarmazane: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356; kills Wicher, 362; killed, 365. Not found elsewhere.

Clarembaut of Vendueil: at Nicaea, 50; in battle of Antioch, 355; rides to aid of Gerard of Melun, 360–61. From Vendueil (dépt. Oise). Widely attested (R-S, p. 203).

Clares: Saracen, kills Alis of Furnes, 122; referred to, 125.

Clariel: Saracen, killed by Rainalt Porcet, 173.

Clarien: Saracen, killed by ‘chétifs’, 23. Saracen in *Roland*, vv. 2670, 2724; giant killed in *Moniage Rainouart*, vol. 2, v. 5354.

Clarifans: Saracen, fights ‘chétifs’, 24. Brother of Clariens in *Roland*, v. 2670.

Clarion: Saracen, guards tower at Antioch, 129. Saracen found in *Bataille Loquifer*.

Clemence: wife of Robert of Flanders from the comital house of Burgundy; referred to with two sons, 251 (R-S, pp. 94, 119, 139, 247).

Cleremes: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Conan the Breton: Conan III of Lamballe; at Nicaea, 50. Widely attested (R-S, p. 203).

Conras: Saracen, gives Garsion razor, 193. Not found elsewhere.

Corbabel, lord of Lutis: Saracen, killed by Wicher at fall of Antioch, 262. Not found elsewhere.

Corbadan: Saracen, killed by Hugh of St-Pol at Nicaea, 56.

Corbadas: Saracen, receives some of the ‘chétifs’ as captives, 31; owner of sword, 177. Corbadas is the king of Jerusalem in the *Jérusalem*; the historical Fatimid governor Iftikhar ad-Daulah. Cornumarant is his son. Also referred to in *Les Enfances Renier: chanson de geste du XIIIe siècle*, ed. D. Dalens-Marekovic (Paris, 2009), vv. 19673, 19688.

Corbaran of Oliferne: the central villain of the poem. Defeats ‘chétifs’ at Civetot, 18–34; referred to, 46, 121; accuses Sansadoine of drunkenness, 203; describes Civetot, 208; referred to, 212; and Bohemond, 223–4; attacks Baldwin at Edessa en route to Antioch, 225–7; sends messengers to Garsion, 241–2; referred to, 244; arrival at Antioch, 268–72; given Roger of Barneville’s head, 273–4; in reprise, 274; discusses terms with Sansadoine, 275–6; and rusty Christian weapons, 276; sends out letters, 277; dialogue with mother, 277–83; orders attack, 284; referred to, 285; refuses embassy, 294–9; imprisons spy and sends Amedelis, 302–4; referred to, 306; invoked in discussions on Lance, 307–13; dialogue with Amedelis and Rouge Lion about Christian columns, 315–28; executes spy and gives order about fire, 330; sends Amedelis in belated embassy, 330–2; orders Rouge Lion towards sea, 332; takes up position in mountains and fights Bohemond, 333; orders attack after Rouge Lion’s defeat, 336; miraculous recovery, 345–6; mourns Brohadas, 349–51; criticised by Amedelis, 352; defeated, 358–9; final showdown with Godfrey, 362–4. The fictional version of the historical Kiwam ed-Daula Karbugha, atabeg of Mosul, who assembled a large army to break the Christian siege of Antioch: in the event, he arrived too late and was defeated three weeks later in the battle of Antioch. He is portrayed here as seneschal to the sultan of Persia and as Garsion’s nephew. He appears in all sources for the First Crusade; see also Ibn al-Athir, *Histoire des atabegs de Mosul*, in *RHC Or.* vol. 2, part 2, pp. 28–31. The *Antioche* develops his role as key Saracen adversary; the tables are later turned, unhistorically, in the ‘chétifs’ where he is helped by his Christian captives against his overlord the sultan of Persia and considers conversion to Christianity.

Corbas: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Corholt: Saracen, killed by William Fitzmarquis, 97. Not found elsewhere.

Cornumarant: son of Corbadas, king of Jerusalem. Owner of sword, 177; referred to, 217.

Corholt of Tabarie: Saracen killed by William Fitzmarquis, 96. In *Bueves de Commarchis*, ed. A. Scheler (Brussels 1874), *passim*.

count of Baudas: assigned tower at Antioch, 133. Not identified.

count of Clermont: at first attack on Antioch, 126. Possibly to be identified with Andrew of Clermont, q.v. (R-S, p. 232), or Fulk of Clermont (R-S, p. 234).

count of Limoges: at Nicaea, 50. Not identified.

count of Nevers: assigned tower at Antioch, 133. William II, count of Nevers (dépt. Nièvre). AA records his participation in the crusade of 1101; he was almost certainly not part of the earlier expedition (R-S, p. 225).

Crucados: Saracen, announces arrival of Corbaran to Garsion, 265. Saracen giant killed by Rainouart in *Aliscans*, ed. C. Régnier (Paris, 1990), v. 6129; also *Moniage Rainouart*, v. 750.

D

Dacien or Datien: betrayer of Antioch. Son captured and returned, 229–30; approaches Bohemond, 232; divine vision, 238; negotiations with Bohemond, 239–41, 243–4; kills wife, 244–5; increasing desperation at Christians' cowardice, 248–53; guides Christians inside Antioch, 255–8; brother killed, 257–8; encourages Christians, 258. He is given this name only here and in OV (pp. 86–7); other sources call him Pirrus. The historical traitor is thought to have been a disaffected Armenian named Firuz.

Daheri: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87; killed by William Fitzmarquis, 95. Not elsewhere but possibly echoes King Darius of Persia.

Daniel: Saracen, killed at Nicaea, 56. Generally the prophet or a Christian, occasionally Saracen (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 338).

David: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Name evokes the Old Testament.

David, King: evoked alongside Julius Caesar, 156; evoked in prayer, 184.

Derions: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Dimas: one of the thieves at the Crucifixion, 8. Found in the Gospel of Nicodemus: *L'Evangile de Nicodème*, ed. A. E. Ford (Geneva, 1973), p. 47.

Dinemors: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Doon de Mayence: evoked as ancestor of Robert of Normandy, 300. Appears in numerous *chansons de geste*: son of Gui de Maience and father of 12 sons including Girart de Roussillon (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 350).

Dreux of Nesle: at Nicaea, 50, 66, 68; rallies troops, 70; referred to, 72; fights, 73; at battle of Antioch, 355. Also attested by AA, RM, Gilo and WT (R-S, p.

203); from Nesle (dépt. Somme). See W. M. Newman, *Les seigneurs de Nesle en Picardie* (Philadelphia, 1971).

Drogo of Monecy: sent by Godfrey as minder for Stephen of Blois, 62; enters Antioch, 253; rides to rescue of Gerard of Melun, 360–61. Drogo I of Mouchy-le-Châtel (dépt. Oise). Also in AA, OV, WT (R-S, p. 203).

duke of Brittany: see Otto below.

E

Elias: crusader: killed at Nicaea, 65. Not recorded elsewhere.

Elyas: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Also found in *La Chanson d'Aspremont*, ed. L. Brandin (2 vols, Paris, 1970), vv. 6956, 9035. Also the name of the Chevalier au Cygne in some branches

emir of Persia, Garsion's nephew: receives some of the 'chétifs' as captives, 31; too badly injured to be traded for Rainalt Porcet, 179–83.

emperor of Byzantium: see Alexius I Comnenus.

Enguerrand of St-Pol: nicknamed Taillefer, 322: at Constantinople, 43; kills large numbers of Saracens at Nicaea, 56; at Nicaea, 68, 73; finds ford across the Orontes, 119–20; kills Acéré, 120; releases captives from tower, 122–3; in first attack at Antioch, 126; at siege, 129; helps foraging expedition, 161; attacks Sansadoine, 195–6; enters Antioch, 253; goes to palace and kills 100 Turks, 259; kills Garsion's nephew and fights Garsion, 261–2; leads out column for battle of Antioch with father and Bernard and Walter of Domedart, 322; asks Adhemar not to sprinkle helmet with holy water, 322; in battle, 352, 355. From St-Pol (dépt. Pas-de-Calais). Hero of the *Antioche*, but also widely recorded elsewhere in the historical sources. See introduction, chapter 1 and R-S, p. 204; for the St-Pol dynasty see R. Fossier, *La terre et les hommes en Picardie* (2 vols, Paris, 1968), vol. 2, p. 483.

Ernols of Beauvais: one of the 'chétifs', 17–34; eaten by serpent in the 'chétifs', identified by head left uneaten and avenged by brother Baldwin of Beauvais, an episode referred to at 17. Not attested elsewhere. From Beauvais (dépt. Oise).

Erodes: Saracen, killed at battle of Antioch, 365. Name evokes Herod.

Escam: companion of Judas, 13.

Eschnignar: Saracen, at Nicaea, 50. Also in *La Chanson des Saisnes*, ed. A. Brasseur (2 vols, Geneva, 1989), v. 129.

Escorfant: Saracen, killed by 'chétifs', 23. Also in *Fierabras*, e.g. vv. 483, 595, and in a number of variant names (Moisan vol. 1, 381–2).

Estorgant: Saracen, killed by 'chétifs', 23; also one of 'eight pagans accursed by God' who tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. Common Saracen name (Moisan vol. 1, 388–9).

Eudes of Beauvais: killed by poisoned arrow, 339; referred to, 355. In RM (p. 171), and Gilo (p. 191) as Eudes of Beaugency; standard-bearer of Count Hugh of Vermandois (R-S, p. 205).

Eurvin of Creel: son of Antelme and descendant of Rainier; minor noble ('vavasor'); his donkey hijacked and eaten by Pierre Postel, 303. Perhaps unsurprisingly, not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 234). Origin possibly Creil (dépt. Oise).

Eustace of Boulogne: Godfrey of Bouillon's elder brother: in battle at Nicaea, 61; referred to, 209; enters Antioch, 253; in battle of Antioch, 355. Completed the Crusade and returned to Boulogne; †1125 (Murray, p. 193).

Everard of Le Puiset: at Nicaea, 50; attacked on foraging expedition, 158–61; attacks Turks on bridge, 165; into Antioch, 253; rides to rescue of Gerard of Melun, 360–61. Everard III of Le Puiset (dépt. Eure-et-Loir), viscount of Chartres; widely attested (R-S, p. 205). See J. L. La Monte, 'The Lords of Le Puiset on the Crusades', *S*, 17 (1942), pp. 100–18, at 100–2.

F

Fabur: amazing Saracen horse taken by Gontier of Aire, 140–43.

Faburs: Saracen: receives Soliman's son on embassy to Antioch, 82–3; guards tower at siege of Antioch, 136.

Faraons: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. The name evokes Pharaoh of the Old Testament.

Firmions: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Floart, King: Saracen, killed at Nicaea by Bernard of Domedart, 60. Various a Saracen, a traitor or a brigand in *chansons de geste* (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 408).

Flohalt: Saracen, one of 'eight pagans accused by God' who tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184.

Fulcher of Alençon: into Antioch, 253; talks to Robert of Normandy, 300; in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 234); from Alençon (dépt. Orne).

Fulcher the orphan, born in Flanders: first to climb into Antioch, 251–3; at battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 234)

Fulk of Melun: one of the 'chétifs', 22, 23, 31, 34. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, 234). Myers, 'Etude...', 82–83 suggests from Meulan (dépt. Yvelines); Fulk was a common family name for counts of Meulan.

G

Gaifiers: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Common Saracen name, e.g. *Aliscans*, v. 115 ; *Gerbert de Mez*, ed. P. Taylor (Namur, 1952), v. 3974.

Galans: see Wayland

Garnier: cited as famous cheat, 303. The reference is unclear.

Garsion: the historical Yaghi-Siyan, Turkish ruler of Antioch, in highly fictionalised form. Referred to, 76; laments death of son, 120–22; reaction, 125; first attack on Antioch, 126; referred to, 134; rallies troops, 140; and theft of Faburs, 143; referred to, 152; receives news of foraging expedition, 163; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 170–74; negotiates truce with Bohemond and Hugh, 175–6; buries pagan, 177; negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178–86; becomes desperate and sends Sansadoine to sultan of Persia, 187–94; cheered by good news of Sansadoine, 198–200; negotiates truce with Bohemond, 236–7; revokes it on Corbaran's arrival, 241–3; fights Enguerrand of St-Pol, 261; takes refuge and trapped in citadel, 262–5; messenger reaches Corbaran, 271; in reprise of action, 274; goes to seek help from sultan and beheaded by Syrian, 368–70.

Gaston of Bearn: rides ahead to Rames, TC 12. Gaston IV, viscount of Béarn; widely attested (R-S, p. 206).

Gautier: killed at Nicaea, 56. Unidentified.

Geldin: interpreter at Byzantine court, 45. Possibly another version of William Claret: see Guielin below.

Genetra: Saracen, companion of Judas, 13.

Genie: Saracen, companion of Judas, 13.

Geoffrey of Las Tours: in battle of Antioch, 355. Likely to represent Golfier of Las Tours, lord of Las Tours in the Limousin and hero of the Occitan *Canso*. Golfier is well attested in crusade sources as the first to climb into Ma'arrat-an-Numan, his exploit being retailed in detail by Gilo (pp. 208–11) and RM (pp. 184–5). He also became famous for saving a lion which tried to follow his ship when he left the Holy Land and drowned. See discussion at *Canso* introduction 9–17 (R-S, p. 209).

Gerard of Cérisy: at Nicaea, 72; in battle of Antioch, 355. Gerard I, lord of Quierzy (dépt. Aisne); also in AA and WT (R-S, p. 208).

Gerard of Gournay: at Nicaea, 72; in battle of Antioch, 355. Gerard of Gournay-en-Bray (dépt. Seine-Maritime), who subsequently made a further pilgrimage to the Holy Land; also in AA, BB, OV (R-S, pp. 166, 208).

Gerard of Melun: rather foolishly rides out to challenge Saracens and is killed, 360–61. The account in the Antioche is from RM (pp. 172–3); also found in Gilo (p. 193). R-S identifies as Gerard the Old of Meleone (p. 208).

Gerard of the Donjon: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 234).

Getas: thief at the Crucifixion, 10. Found in the *Gospel of Nicodemus* (p. 47).

Gilbert of Reims: in first attack at Antioch, 126. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 235).

Gobaut, son of Madel: Saracen, killed by Hugh of St-Pol at Nicaea, 56.

Godeschalk: 'brother of Hugh, duke of the Basques'; at Nicaea, 50; in first attack at Antioch, 126; at siege of Antioch, 130. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 235).

Godfrey of Bouillon: leader of the Lotharingian contingent on crusade and first ruler of Jerusalem as 'advocate of the Holy Sepulchre' (1099–1100). Referred to, 2; at Clermont, 35; leads negotiations at Constantinople, 39–47; sends Stephen of

Blois to cut off Turks, to Stephen's chagrin, 62; 68; goes to rescue, 71–3; saves Bohemond and the Crusade at Dorylaeum, 90–100; arrives at Sidre, 111–12; at Antioch, 120; fights off night attack, 124; in first attack, 125–6; sets up siege, 135; reference to future coronation, 135; praises Gontier of Aire, 143; encourages army, 157; helps foraging expedition, 161; bisects Turk, 162; Raimbaut Creton taken to his tent to recover, 169; drinks with King of Tafurs, 175; negotiates over Rainalt Porcet, 178–9; invoked by Rainalt, 185; referred to, 190, 209; suggests Stephen of Blois ill, 233–4; leads out force ready for assault on Antioch, 246–7; consulted by Robert of Flanders and offers to be first up ladder, 250; first in through gate, 258–9; issues orders, 261; kills Bricebalt, 263; dispositions at Antioch, 264; referred to, 279; Saracens play chess for his head, 299; soothes Robert of Normandy's hurt pride, 300–301; fails to recognise Adhemar armed, 306; refuses to carry Lance into battle, 309; leads out column, 318; defeats Rouge Lion with Robert of Normandy, 335–6; his sudden friendship with Hugh, 338; comes to Hugh's aid with Wicher, 339–41; in battle, 355; kills Soliman, 357; example of heroism, 359; showdown with Corbaran, 262–5; goes to Edessa via Ravenel, TC2; and bishop of Albara, TC3; receives message from Jesus to go to Jerusalem, TC11. Son of Eustace II of Boulogne and Ida; held the county of Verdun and fief of Bouillon, and invested with the duchy of Lower Lorraine in 1087. Eventually to become legendary hero and one of the Nine Worthies (Murray: *passim*.) See J. C. Andressohn, *The Ancestry and Life of Godfrey of Bouillon* (Bloomington, 1947); also H. Glaesener, 'Godefroid de Bouillon était-il un mediocre?', *RHE*, 39 (1943), pp. 309–41. For discussion of his transformation into legendary hero see Introduction, chapter 1.

Gondran: one of 'eight pagans accursed by God'; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. Robber chief in *Moniage Guillaume*, ed. N. Andrieux-Reix (Paris, 2003), vv. 1232, 1281 etc.

Gondris: one of 'eight pagans accursed by God'; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. Saracen in *Moniage Rainouart*, v. 4252.

Gontier of Aire: squire to Robert of Flanders; steals the horse Faburs, 142–43; enters Antioch, 253. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 235).

Gosson: Gozelo of Montaigu; killed by Soliman and lamented by father Conon, 114–15. Also in AA (Murray, pp. 205–6; R-S, p. 209). According to AA (pp. 186–7), he died of illness rather than in battle.

Graindor de Douai: compiler or patron of the *Antioche*, 1. See Introduction, chapter 1.

Gramarmes: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Grandons: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Previously killed by Roland: *Roland*, vv. 1593.

Grogelans: Saracen, guards tower at Antioch, 134. Not found elsewhere.

Guenedons: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Guieilin: counsellor of emperor, 38. Probably fictional, but Anna Comnena has another westerner ‘Gelielmos o Klareles’ alongside Guy (trans. Sewter, p. 417; in AA he is William Claret, pp. 758–9).

Guigiers: see Wicher (also spelt Hungiers in text).

Guinebalt: Saracen, one of ‘eight pagans accursed by God’; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. Not found elsewhere.

Guy of Porsese: lord of Possesse (dépt. Marne); at Nicaea, 50; kills Pisant de Valeresse, 55; in battle at Nicaea, 68, 70, 73; dies of illness, 75; burial, 76. Also in AA, WT (R-S, p. 210).

Guy the seneschal: Bohemond’s half-brother, in Emperor Alexios’s service: helps crusaders, 38–45; lament for Bohemond when emperor retreats, 286. See AC, pp. 188–91, 406–10, 420.

H

Hangosion, king: Saracen, at council of war, 213. Not found elsewhere.

Hardron: Saracen, accompanies Sansadoine, 190. See Moisan for Hardré, brother of Gondron (vol. 1, pp. 558–9); alternatively Moisan suggests reading Sardion (vol. 2, p. 877).

Harpin: Eudes Arpin, viscount of Bourges: one of the ‘chétifs’, 17–34; in fact participated in the 1101 crusade and not the earlier expedition (R-S, p. 204). Sold his lands to the king of France to go on crusade; held captive and became monk at Cluny on his return to France (OV, pp. 350–3).

Haton: Thomas de la Fère’s companion; in first attack at Antioch, 126. Not recorded elsewhere.

Herbert, ‘duke’ of the Basques: at Nicaea, 50; in first attack on Antioch, 126; at siege of Antioch, 130. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 235).

Hercules, brother of the emir: at Antioch, 152, 178. Evokes classical antiquity; not found as Saracen name elsewhere.

Herluin: accompanies Peter the Hermit on embassy to Corbaran, 295–99; named in *GF* and derived sources as accompanying Peter on his mission to Kerbogha (R-S, p. 211). The *Canso* is alone in showing him as informant to Corbaran (*Canso*, pp. 192–205).

Hernald the Lorrainer: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 233).

Herod: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Well known as the NT slaughterer of the Innocents; for Herod as a Saracen name, see Moisan, vol. 1, p. 581.

Hident or Hident, son of Soliman: killed by Baldwin Cauderon, 54; his death invoked, 63, 65, 66, 69, 83, 87 103–5. Not found elsewhere.

Hugh of Dijon: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 235).

Hugh of St-Pol: kills Saracens at Nicaea and taunts Enguerrand, 56; at Nicaea, 68; first across ford over Orontes, 119–20; in first attack on Antioch, 126; in siege,

129; on foraging expedition, 158–61; takes Turkish child round on mule, 230; at sack of Antioch, 261; leads out column with Enguerrand and Walter and Bernard of Domedart, 322; in battle of Antioch, 352, 355. Hugh II, count of St-Pol. Widely attested; in the *Antioche* prominent as Enguerrand's father (R-S, p. 212).

Hugh of Vermandois: also known as Hugh the Maisné; brother of King Philip of France (R-S, 213): referred to, 2; at Clermont, 35; at Nicaea, 72–3; in siege of Antioch, 137; helps on foraging expedition, 161; Garsion's nephew imprisoned in his tent, 169; negotiates truce with Garsion along with Bohemond, 175–76; in negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178–9, 185; referred to, 209; pleased over Turkish child hostage, 230; at attack on Antioch, 247; enters Antioch, 257; dispositions at Antioch, 264; singled out as prospective prisoner for sultan of Persia by Corbaran, 277; referred to, 279; refuses to carry Lance into battle and suggests Adhemar, 312–13; claims honour of riding out first at battle of Antioch, 315; summoned along with Godfrey, his friend, to help Bohemond, 338; avenges death of standard-bearer Eudes with help from Godfrey and Wicher, 339–40; in battle, 355; kills Sansadoine, 357; example of heroism, 359; at Adhemar's funeral, TC1. Younger son of Henry I and Anne of Kiev. Despite his less than impressive achievements on Crusade his nickname of 'Maisné' became deformed to 'Magnus' over time: see OV, bk V, ch.34, n. 9. Becomes more prominent in last third of poem reflecting use of Robert as source: see RM, introduction 19 for Robert's emphasis on Hugh (p. 19), and M. Bull, 'The Capetian Monarchy and the Early Crusade movement: Hugh of Vermandois and Louis VII', *NMS*, 40 (1996), pp. 25–46.

Hugh, count of Vendôme: at Nicaea, 50. Unlikely: Duparc-Quioic demonstrates that the county of Vendôme (dépt. Loir-et-Cher) was held at the time by Euphrosine and her husband Geoffrey Jordan (*Edition*, p. 559).

I

Iaumons: Saracen killed at battle of Aspremont, son of Agolans. Quoted as example of heroism, 377 (Moisan, vol.1, p. 188).

Irashels: connected with legendary sword, 177.

J

Jesus Christ: *passim*; appears in vision with the Virgin and St Peter to priest of church of St Mary the Virgin in Antioch, 288–9.

John of Alis: one of the 'chétifs', 17–34; not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 236). Myers, 'Etude...', 77–9 suggests that he was the second abbot of Fécamp.

Jonah: referred to in prayer, 184.

Jonas: Saracen: lucky recipient of Garsion's beard, 193. *Passim* in *La Prise de Pampelune*, ed. A. Mussafia (Vienna, 1864).

Jonatas: Jonathan, owner of shield, 347.

Josuaus: Saracen: guards tower at Antioch, 129. Common Saracen name: Moisan, vol. 1, p. 629–30.

Josué: Saracen general: captured by king of Tafurs, 183.

Judas Iscariot: referred to, 13.

Judas Maccabeus: Saracen and previous owner of sword, 177; named after Jewish hero of second century bce. Also the name of a Saracen leader at battle of Antioch, 356.

Judas, brother of ‘apostolic caliph’: summoned by Garsion, 193. Common Saracen name (Moisan, vol.1, p. 631).

Julius Caesar: evoked, 156.

K

king of St Denis: King Philip I of France (r. 1060–1108); evoked on Peter the Hermit’s mission, 17.

king of the Asues: see Asnes

King of the Tafurs: guards tower at Antioch, 138; cannibalism of, 174–5; referred to, 177; breaks truce by capturing Josué, 183; leads Tafurs in taking palace at Antioch, killing and raping indiscriminately, 262–63; leads out column, 326; in battle, 353. The Tafurs were a horde of lawless and ragged soldiers belonging to nobody’s contingent. They were associated particularly with cannibalism at Ma’arrat-an-Nu’mān, something the *Antioche* dwells on repeatedly. While they are referred to in other sources, notably GN, the OFCC gives them a much larger role with the King placed on a level with the other leaders of the Crusade and given the honour of crowning Godfrey at *Jérusalem*, vv. 5299–330. For further discussion see introduction, chapter 1.

Kinkanant: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87. For the name: *Anseis de Carthage*, vv. 6545–6; *Moniage Rainouart*, v. 5360.

L

Lambert of Liège: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere; may be same as next entry.

Lambert: son of Conon (of Montaigu); in battle at Nicaea, 58; mourns brother Gosson 115. Also in AA and WT (Murray, p. 215; R-S, p. 214). Brother of Gozelon.

Lamusars: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere

Lazarus: invoked in Christian prayers, 184, 253, 364.

Lirions: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Lokifer, King: Saracen, one of ‘eight pagans accursed by God’; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. Saracen giant, champion of Desramé, killed by Rainouart in single combat: *Aliscans*, vv. 3014, 8429; also the protagonist in *La Bataille Loquifer*.

Longinus: centurion at the death of Christ; evoked 72, 253.

Lorions, King: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere

Louis of Mosson: in battle of Antioch, 355. Louis, count of Mousson (dépt. Meurthe-et-Moselle), son of Thierry of Montbéliard; also in AA and WT (R-S, p. 215).

Lucions: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Common Saracen name: Moisan, vol. 1, p. 654.

Lus: Saracen, accompanies Sansadoine, 190. Not found elsewhere.

M

Madonies of Oliandre: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356 (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 662).

Mahon, brother of the emir: Saracen: guards tower, 139.

Malades: Saracen, at Antioch, 121. The name invokes illness: cf. Mallars below.

Malau: companion of Judas, 13.

Malaumna: companion of Judas, 13.

Mallars: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. The name evokes illness: cf. Malades above (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 671).

Malquidant: Saracen, killed by Rainalt Porcet, 173. Common Saracen name, 'malcuidant' means a person with bad intentions. See Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 672–3 for other examples.

Maltamin: Saracen, killed by Hugh of St-Pol, 158. Not found elsewhere.

Margos, King: at court of sultan of Persia; centenarian; raises Soliman to his feet, 206. Often used as the name of a Saracen god or king (Moisan, vol. 1, pp. 686–7).

Matthew of Clermont: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 236).

Mecca, three kings of, brothers: summoned by Sultan of Persia, 219–20. Marco Polo refers to five brothers (four in one version) who are kings of India: *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. R. E. Latham (Harmondsworth, 1958), p. 233.

Milo, count of Navarre: at Nicaea, 50. See William of Nevers (Duparc-Quioc, *Edition*, p. 561).

Mohammed: occurs throughout the text. Sometimes forms part of trinity with Apollon and Tervagant, q.v.; more generally equivalent of Christian God. He is also portrayed in defiance of the tenets of Islam as a statue that is worshipped juggernaut-style at 221–2. His portrayal in the text is fictionalised and bears no resemblance to the real Mohammed or the beliefs of Islam.

Morel: Enguerrand's horse, 56.

Morgan la Fée: referred to, 218. Variousy King Arthur's sister, wife of Julius Caesar and mother of St. George. Widely found (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 717).

Morgant, Morghant: Morgan la Fée's brother. Common Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 717). Major character in *Baudouin de Sebourg*, where he is the brother of the Old Man of the Mountain.

Multrel: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87. Not found elsewhere.

Murgalie: rich Saracen, provides billet for Corbaran, 18–19.

N

Noah: invoked in prayer, 253.

Noiron: denizen of Hell who built the Eskinant gate at Antioch, 264.

Noiron: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Unclear whether the same as preceding character. The name evokes Nero. Widely found (Moisan, vol. 1, p. 735).

O

Old Man of the Mountain: summons Baldwin to Edessa, 110. Used by the *Chanson* to refer to the ruler of Edessa, at this time Thoros (Murray, pp. 124–5). See C. E. Nowell, 'The Old Man of the Mountains', *S*, 22 (1947), pp. 497–519.

Oliver: evoked as example of heroism, 337, 358.

Oliver of Jussi: rallies troops at Nicaea, 68; referred to, 72; guards tower at siege of Antioch, 134. Also in AA (R-S, p. 215).

Olivier of Venise: at Nicaea, 50. not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 236).

Orchenais: Saracen, lookout for Soliman, 65. *La Prise d'Orange*, ed. C. Régnier (Paris, 1986), vv. 1140, 1151, 1158.

Orgaie, Soliman's nephew: accompanies Soliman's son, 82; referred to, 84; killed by William Fitzmarquis, 95. The name evokes 'orgueil', pride.

Otto, duke of Brittany: at Nicaea, 50; in first attack at Antioch, 126; assigned tower at siege of Antioch, 130. The duke of Brittany at this time was Alan Fergent (R-S, p. 198).

Ouedon: killed at Antioch, 122. Not recorded elsewhere (as Eudon of St-Valéry, R-S, p. 234).

P

Pagan of Garland: in first attack at Antioch, 126. In AA as steward to the king of France; WT calls him Guy of G. and Walter of G. Gilbert Payen of Garland, seneschal of the King of France (R-S, pp. 88, 208).

Patriarch of Jerusalem: visited by and gives message to Peter the Hermit, 15–16.

Payan of Beauvais: rides to rescue of Gerard of Melun, 360–61. Also in RM, pp. 172–3 (R-S, p. 216).

- Payen of Camel:** in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).
- Peter (Bartholomew):** vision of St Andrew at Antioch, 290–91; subsequent ordeal, TC 9–10. Occitan; finder of the Holy Lance in Antioch (R-S, p. 216).
- Peter of Astenois or Stadeneis:** with Baldwin, 106; leads column with Rainald of Toul, 324. Also in AA and WT (as Peter of Dampierre-le-Château) (Murray, p. 219; R-S, p. 217).
- Peter the Hermit:** role in first expedition and trip to Rome, 15–35; referred to, 117, 123; suggests cannibalism to King of Tafurs, 174; referred to, 208; with Tafur King at Antioch, 62; embassy to Corbaran, 295–99; reports back, 302; in battle, 353. Presented by the *Chanson* and by AA as instigator of the expedition; a hero of the *Chanson*. Participated in the First Crusade to its conclusion in 1099. In 1100 he returned to Europe and founded an Augustinian monastery at Neufmoutier near Huy (Belgium). He died in 1115. AA is generally thought to have been mistaken in making Peter the instigator of the expedition, but for a review of the evidence and reassessment of his role see E. O. Blake and C. Morris, 'A hermit goes to war: Peter and the origins of the first crusade', *SCH*, 22 (1985), pp. 79–107; J. Flori, *Pierre l'Ermite et la Première Croisade* (Paris, 1999).
- Pharaoh:** referred to by Calabra, 278.
- Pharaon:** companion of Judas, 13.
- Pierre Postel:** minor noble ('vavasor'); hijacks and eats donkey of Eurvin de Creel, 303. Born near Montdidier, not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).
- Pilate:** Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. The Pontius Pilate of the Bible; the name is often used for a demon or Saracen god (Moisan, vol. 2, p. 783).
- Pinel:** Saracen, in battle at Nicaea, 55. See also *Aliscans*, v. 24.
- Pisant of Valeresse:** Turk: killed at Nicaea by Guy of Porsese, 55.
- Ploia:** companion of Judas, 13
- Pontius Pilate:** referred to, 14.
- pope:** visited by Peter the Hermit and launches crusade, 17. Urban II (1088–99); launched the crusade in November 1095.
- priest killed singing Mass:** 24–6; the episode is from *GF*, p. 4.
- priest of church of St Mary the Virgin in Antioch:** has vision of Christ, the Virgin and St Peter, 287–90
- Principle, brother of Gonderont:** Saracen, guards tower at siege of Antioch, 138; killed by Rainalt Porcet, 173 (Moisan, vol. 2, p. 795).
- Ptolemy:** king of Egypt in antiquity; previous owner of sword, 177.

R

Raimbaut Creton: at Nicaea, 50; exploit killing Turks on bridge and rescue by St Michael, 167–9; enters Antioch, 253; in battle, 355. Widely attested (R-S, p. 218). See R-S for subsequent dispute with monastery of Bonneval and imposition of 14 years' penance (pp. 155–6).

Raimbald of Coumarci: assigned tower at siege of Antioch, 134. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).

Raimbald of Orange: in battle at Antioch, 355. Raimbald II, count of Orange: also in AA and WT (R-S, p. 218).

Rainald: with Baldwin of Boulogne, 106. Identity unclear.

Rainald, Count: in battle of Antioch, 355. Identity unclear.

Rainald, Duke: with Raymond IV leads Peter Bartholomew away after ordeal, TC 10. Identity unclear.

Rainald of Beauvais: at Nicaea, 50; in battle of Antioch, 355; captures Saracen letter, TC 3. Also in AA, WT and Gilo; the last shows him as part of the *iuventus* of Hugh of Vermandois (Gilo, pp. 190–93): R-S, p. 218.

Rainald of Nivelles: in first attack at Antioch, 126. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).

Rainald of Toul: Peter of Astenois' brother (see above); leads out column with him, 324; killed by Rouge Lion, 333–35. Reinhard III, count of Toul. In AA, BD and others (Murray, p. 221; R-S, p. 220).

Rainalt Porcet: trapped, 164; captured, 169–74; part of truce negotiations, 176; torture and presumed death, 178–87. Also in PT and *HP* (R-S, p. 219). For discussion see introduction, chapter 1.

Ralph of Beaugency: fights at Nicaea, 72; assigned tower at Antioch, 134. Widely attested (R-S, p. 219). Endowed church of La Trinité de Vendôme with tithe on return from Crusade (RS, p. 145).

Ralph of Ghent: sent by Godfrey as minder for Stephen of Blois, 62. Also in AA as Ralph of Aalst (Murray, p. 222; R-S, p. 219).

Raymond of St-Gilles: leader of the Occitan contingent. At Clermont, 35; at Nicaea, 49, 51, 56, 74; at Dorylaeum, 100; with Adhemar at siege of Antioch, 132; his foraging expeditions attacked, 144–5, 158–61; on night watch, 187; referred to, 209; on night watch, 234; demurs at Bohemond's plans for Antioch, 241; tells barons delay has made them vulnerable to attack by Corbaran, 242; has sick carried into Antioch, 260; unhappy at being left to guard city entrance during battle of Antioch, 314; his banner displaced by Bohemond's, 371; at Adhemar's funeral, TC1; takes la Tamerie, TC 2–3; leads Peter Bartholomew away in company with a mysterious Duke Rainald, TC 10. Second son of Almodis de la Marche and Pons of Toulouse; remained in the Holy Land after the crusade as ruler of Tripoli and died there 1105 (R-S, p. 219). See J. H. and L. L. Hill, *Raymond IV* (New York, 1962).

Red Lion known as Satanias or Sathanas, Rouge Lion: summoned by Garsion, 193; summoned by sultan, 216; with Corbaran and 30 kings, 242, 244; plays chess for heads of Christian leaders, 299; referred to in dialogue about carrying Lance, 307–13; provides comic counterpoint in dialogue about Christian columns, 315–27; ordered by Corbaran to march towards sea, 332–3; defeats Rainald of Toul, 333–35; defeated by Robert of Normandy and Godfrey, 336; killed by Robert of Normandy, 357. As Rosseleon, one of the four deputy rulers of Antioch in AA (pp. 196–7; 326–7); in the *Antioche* a comic counterpoint to Amedelis as the Christian

forces march out. Found in poetry only in the OFCC and related texts, with one exception: a passing reference at v. 1298 of *Tristan de Nanteuil*, ed. K. V. Sinclair (Assen, 1971).

Richard le Pèlerin: supposed previous author of the *Antioche*, 356.

Richard of Caumont: one of the 'chétifs', 17–34; referred to, 278. Richard of Chaumont-en-Vexin (dépt. Oise) and a 'probable' crusader according to R-S (pp. 231; 240, 249); brother of Hugh of Le Puiset's brother-in-law. See Myers, 'Etude', pp. 79–82, for identification as possible younger brother in family.

Richard of Pavia: *chétif*, sent into captivity 31. Not recorded elsewhere and his place of origin seems unlikely (R-S, p. 237). For Renaud of Pavia in some versions of the 'chétifs' see Myers, 'Etude', pp. 83–4.

Richard of Verdun: assigned tower at Antioch, 134. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).

Richard the Prince: Richard of the Principate, count of Salerno; with Tancred, 110. Count of Salerno and cousin of Bohemond; also took part in Bohemond's crusade of 1107–8. Son of William count of Salerno, brother of Robert Guiscard. Well attested on Crusade (R-S, p. 220); according to Jamison, son of Count Rainulf of Caiazzo: 'Some notes', pp. 197–8.

Richard, son of Doon of Mayence: ancestor of Robert of Normandy, 300

Richenés: Saracen, one of Soliman's sons; at Nicaea and encourages Soliman, 65, 66, 69, 73; flees, 74; sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87; at Dorylaeum, 92–93; killed by William Fitzmarquis, 97; mourned 103–105. Not found elsewhere

Robert of Flanders: one of the leaders of the Crusade. Referred to, 2; at Constantinople, 39; at Nicaea, 52; questions Stephen of Blois, 72; fights, 73; at Baldwin Cauderon's death, 75; arrival at Antioch, 120; in first attack on Antioch, 126; in siege, 129, 136; praises Gontier of Aire, 143; helps with foraging, 161; referred to, 175; in negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178; night watch, 234; prepares for entry to Antioch with Godfrey, 246–47; loses patience with cowards at ladder and starts to climb himself, 248–53; in Antioch, 253, 256; finds and kills Datien's brother, 257–58; at sack of Antioch, 261; dispositions at Antioch, 264; head played for in chess by Saracens, 299; battle order, 300; refuses to carry Lance into battle, 307; leads out column, 316; in battle, 342, 355; example of heroism, 359; at Adhemar's funeral, TC1. Robert II, count of Flanders The *Antioche* persistently confuses him with his father 'the Frisian' (R-S, p. 220). See M. M. Knappen, 'Robert II of Flanders in the First Crusade' in *The Crusades and Other Historical Essays*, ed. L. J. Paetow (New York, 1928), pp. 79–100.

Robert of Normandy: eldest son of William I of England and one of the leaders of the Crusade. Referred to, 2; at Constantinople, 39 43; at Nicaea, 51; first to arm, 52; at death of Baldwin Cauderon, 75; goes with Bohemond, 91; at Dorylaeum, 96, 100; first attack at Antioch, 126; in siege, 131; foraging expedition, 161; encourages forces, 165; in negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178–81; referred to, 209; stationed by Godfrey for attack on Antioch, 246–47; into Antioch, 253; in Antioch accompanies Datien 256–58; dispositions at Antioch, 264; head played for at chess, 299; dispute with Godfrey, 300–301; refuses to carry Lance into

battle, 308; leads out column, 317; refuses Corbaran's last-minute embassy, 331–2; defeats Rouge Lion with Godfrey, 335–6; attacks Corbaran, 344; in battle, 355; kills Rouge Lion, 357; example of heroism, 359; at Adhemar's funeral, TC 1. Defeated by his brother Henry I at Tinchebrai, 1106, and passed the rest of his life in captivity. See William M. Aird, *Robert Curthose: Duke of Normandy* (Woodbridge, 2008).

Robert the Frisian: see Robert of Flanders, above. Robert I, count of Flanders; second son of Baldwin V of Lille and Adela of France; Robert was nicknamed 'the Frisian' after his marriage to Gertrude, countess of Holland. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1085. Supposed recipient of letter from Alexius asking for help from the West: for discussion, translation and references see Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk*, pp. 217–22. See also C. Verlinden, *Robert Ier le Frison* (Ghent, 1935). The *Antioche* persistently confuses him with his son Robert of Flanders; the *Canso* is clear on the difference (pp. 216–17).

Roboant: Saracen, killed by 'chétifs', 23; killed (presumably a different Roboant) by Rainalt Porcet, 173. See *Prise d'Orange*, v. 589, *Anseis de Carthage*, v. 2716.

Rodamus: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Rodoant: uncle of Sansadoine; offers him hospitality on his mission, 200. Al-Malik Ridwan Ibn-Tutush, the Seldjuk ruler of Aleppo 1095–1113: see R. W. Crawford, 'Ridwan the maligned', in *The World of Islam*, ed. J. Kritzeck and R. B. Winder (London, 1959), pp. 135–44.

Roger of Barneville: killed on sortie and head taken to Corbaran, 273–4. The episode is translated from RM. Widely attested (R-S, p. 221); according to Jamison, 'Some notes', pp. 207–8, from the Cotentin and attested in Palermo by 1086.

Roger of Rosoie: at Nicaea, 50; at siege of Antioch with Tancred, 147; in battle of Antioch, 355. Roger of Rozoy (dépt. Aisne), castellan of Jaffa. Also in AA (Murray, p. 227; R-S, p. 222).

Roger the Emperor: at Nicaea, 50, 56; in first attack on Antioch, 126. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 237).

Roger the pugnacious: with Tancred at Antioch, 127. Not otherwise identified.

Roland: eponymous hero of the *Chanson de Roland*. Cited as classic example of heroism, 337, 358.

Rotrou of (La) Perche: at Nicaea, 50; accompanies Bohemond at Dorylaeum, 91; doubts, 125; assigned tower at Antioch, 134; goes foraging and is attacked, 158–61; enters Antioch, 253; in battle, 355. Also in OV and WT (R-S, p. 222). Count of Perche and Mortagne (dépt. Cher). Dispute with Hugh II of Le Puiset (R-S, pp. 136, 155); became confrater of Cluny (R-S, pp. 144–45); further crusading activity (R-S, p. 166).

Rubiant: Calabra's father; 218; also clerk at Persian court; 213; similar to Rubion, nephew of Yaghi-Sian, 126. Very common Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 2, pp. 853–4).

S

St Andrew: appears to Peter (Bartholomew) in vision, 291; referred to, TC 10. Other crusade sources depict him in the same role e.g. *GF*, 59–60; BB, 67–8; RA, *passim*. The *Canso* is the only text to show him amongst the saints guiding the Christian forces (v. 147).

St Demetrius: help foretold by Adhemar, 53; at Dorylaeum, 100; helps fight off night attack by Soliman, 124; presence at Dorylaeum referred to, 210; aid at battle of Antioch, 358. Byzantine warrior saint: military martyr of fourth century and defender of Thessaloniki. See C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 67–93.

St Denis: presence at Dorylaeum referred to (although he is not mentioned there earlier), 210. The *Canso* refers to his body at the battle of Antioch (v. 146).

St George: help foretold by Adhemar, 53; at Dorylaeum, 100; helps fight off night attack by Soliman, 124; presence at Dorylaeum referred to, 210; referred to as father of Robert of Flanders, 251; at battle of Antioch, 358. Referred to in other sources at the battle of Antioch e.g. *GF*, p. 69; BB, p. 77; RA, pp. 112–13, has him appearing twice to the priest Peter Desiderius. See Hatem, *Les poèmes*, pp. 362–6 for his cult in Syria; Walter, *Warrior saints*, pp. 109–44.

St John: referred to, 200

St Maurice: in battle of Antioch, 358. Byzantine military saint: martyred with his legion composed of Egyptian Christians.

St Mercurius: in battle of Antioch, 358. Byzantine military saint: martyred at Caesarea under Emperor Trajan.

St Michael: intervenes to save Raimbaut Creton; 169; presence at Dorylaeum referred to (although he is not mentioned there earlier), 210

St Peter: with Jesus Christ and the Virgin in vision to priest of church of St Mary the Virgin at Antioch, 288–9.

St Simeon: referred to, 185, 253. *Gospel of Luke* 2.25–35.

Saladin, son of Soliman: At Nicaea, 51; killed by Tancred, 57; referred to, 66; laments, 76–77; killed (again?) by William Fitzmarquis, 97. Found in the *Prise d'Orange*, v. 437; otherwise only in the Crusade cycle.

Salbons: Saracen king at Persian court, 223. Not found elsewhere.

Samson: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 253. Evokes the Old Testament hero. Very common (Moisan, vol. 2, pp. 871–76).

Samson, Duke: his sword belonging to Godfrey, 161

Samuel: Saracen, companion of Judas, 13; killed by Hugh of St-Pol at Nicaea, 56. Evokes the Old Testament prophet. See *Aliscans*, v. 5447; *Aspremont*, v. 9547.

Sanguis: one of 'eight pagans accursed by God'; tortures Rainalt Porcet, 184. The name evokes blood and bloodiness. Also in *Anseis de Carthage*, v. 805.

Sansadoine, son of Garsion: The historical Sensadolus, Shams al-Dawla, son of Yaghi-Siyan. Garsion consults with him, 163; referred to, 172, 174, 175; offers to go as envoy to sultan of Persia, 187–200; at sultan's court, 195–204; advises Corbaran to stop siege of Edessa, 226–27; Garsion concerned at not hearing from

him, 236; discussions with Corbaran, 269–71, and his dream, 270; in reprise, 274; discusses terms with Corbaran, 275–76; in battle of Antioch, 356; summarily killed by Hugh of Vermandois, 357. One of the few Saracens to be acknowledged by name in the western sources for the Crusade. Name found elsewhere only in *Anseis de Carthage*, vv. 3466, 3880.

Saria: Saracen king at Persian court, 223 (Moisan, vol. 2, p. 877).

Sathanas: voiced by the ‘devil’ inside Mohammed’s idol, 223. Also used as soubriquet for *Rouge Lion*, q.v.

Seon, king of the Almoravids: referred to in Calabra’s prophecies, 278; the first of the Old Testament kings overcome by Moses and Joshua (*Joshua* 12).

Serbadé: one of the companions of Judas, 13.

Seven Sleepers (of Ephesus), tower of: 137. See note to *laisse* 137.

Sigré: Saracen, killed by Hugh of St-Pol at Nicaea, 56. Not found elsewhere.

Simon: at Nicaea, 50; in first attack at Antioch, 126; at siege of Antioch, 130. Always found in company with the duke of Brittany: not recorded elsewhere and possibly included simply to make up the rhyme.

Soliman of Nicaea: Qilij Arslan I, sultan of Rûm 1092–1107 (called Soliman by the crusaders because of his patronymic ‘ibn Suleyman’). Defeats ‘chétifs’, 18–30; efforts to save Nicaea, 46, 51–2; in battle, 62–6; mourns loss of city and sends for help, 78–82; agreement with sultan of Iconium, 82–8; defeated at Dorylaeum, 89–100; laments losses and makes for Mamistra, 103–6; defeated at Sidre by Tancred; told of sons’ death and kills Gosson, 114; with Garsion, 120; night attack, 124; ordered to seek provisions and guards tower, 124–5; in first attack in Antioch, 126; arrives at Sarmazane with 40 Turks and warns Corbaran, 205–12, wife and sons referred to, 207, 211; warns Corbaran about Christians, 269–71; in battle of Antioch, 356; killed summarily by Godfrey, 357. Consistent figure of fun in the poem. Also referred to as Soliman of Nubia, 24; and Soliman of Syria, 65, 117.

Soliman the Younger: one of Soliman’s sons: offers to seek help from Garsion, 76; envoy to sultan of Iconium, 81–84. There is some confusion in the sources between the old Soliman (Qilij Arslan I) and the young Soliman.

Solomon: one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Evokes the Old Testament king. Very common Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 2, pp. 865–7).

Sortins: Saracen, at Antioch, 121. Also found a number of times in *Jourdain de Blayes*, ed. P. F. Dembowski (Paris, 1991).

spy, unnamed: specified as Occitan, 330; will be killed if his report is wrong, 302; duly killed, 330.

Stephen of Albemarle: at Nicaea, 50; assigned tower at Antioch, 139; in battle of Antioch, 355. Also in AA, pp. 98–9; RC mentions men from Albemarle (p. 74); as Stephen, count of Aumale: R-S, p. 223.

Stephen of Blois: count of Blois and Chartres; prominent crusader both as initial leader and for supposed cowardice. At Nicaea, 50; his cowardice there, 62–72; his cowardice at Antioch, 233–4; retreats when ill and puts emperor off sending aid, 284–5. Two of his letters to his wife Adela, daughter of William I of England are extant (Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae*, IV, X) ; also on crusade of 1101, †1102 (R-

S, p. 223). See J. A. Brundage, 'An Errant Crusader: Stephen of Blois', *T*, 16 (1960), pp. 380–95; Wolf, 'Crusade and narrative', pp. 214–15, for suggestion that he is deliberately blackened in the *GF* to serve as a distraction from some of Bohemond's harder-to-justify actions.

Sublicamas or Sublicanas, king: Saracen, summoned by Garsion, 193; summoned by sultan of Persia, 216. Not found elsewhere.

Sucaman, King, cousin of Cornumarant: Saracen, summoned by Sultan of Persia, 217. Suqmān ibn Artuq, d. 1104, is a historical figure.

sultan of Iconium: referred to, 72, 76, 78; in negotiations with Soliman, 82–8.

sultan of Persia: referred to, 46; Rainalt Porcet to be sent there, 172–3; receives embassy of Sansadoine, 200–204; summons help from across the Saracen world, 213–19; 223–4, agrees to send Brohadas with Corbaran; Corbaran writes to him, 277; referred to, 278; Corbaran concerned about his reaction to Brohadas' death, 349; referred to, 363.

T

Tancred FitzMarquis, also referred to as Tancred of Apulia and Tancred son of the Emir: Bohemond's nephew. Referred to, 2; at Clermont, 35; at Constantinople, 39–43; at Nicaea, 51; kills Salehadin, 57; referred to, 68, 72; at death of Baldwin Cauderon, 75; sought by Soliman, 87; at Dorylaeum, 93–4; avenges death of William Fitzmarquis, 97; goes to Torsolt, 102; side adventure, 107–12; in first attack at Antioch, 126; in siege, 127; on guard, 145; guards castle 152–3; encourages army, 165; referred to, 175; in negotiations over Rainalt Porcet, 178; referred to, 190, 195; positioned by Godfrey for attack on Antioch, 246; enters Antioch, 253; in Antioch with Datien, 256–8; at sack of Antioch, 261; referred to, 279; head played for in chess, 299; at council of war, 302; refuses to carry Lance into battle, 310; leads column out, 319; in battle, 343, 355; at Adhemar's funeral, TC 1. Son of Odobonus Marchisus, hence the soubriquet: Jamison, 'Some notes', pp. 196–97. One of the leaders of the crusade: prominent crusader and later prince of Galilee and regent of Antioch during Bohemond's enforced absence in captivity 1100–1103. (Murray, pp. 229–30; R-S, p. 223.) See also R. L. Nicholson, *Tancred* (Chicago, 1940).

Taticius No-Nose: Alexios Komnenos's confidant and general. Takes Christians' side in quarrel with emperor, 38–40; receives Nicaea for Byzantines, 77; at Dorylaeum, 100; at Antioch, 120, 133. According to Greek sources he was of servile origin, the son of a Saracen prisoner of war, but rose to high rank under Alexius. He and the emperor had a relationship of loyalty and trust that is documented from 1078–99. See Basile Skoulatos, *Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade* (Louvain, 1980), pp. 287–92; A. G. C. Savarides, 'Varia Byzantinoturcica II. Taticius the Turcopole', *JOAS*, 3–4 (1991–92), pp. 235–8.

Tenebrois: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Common Saracen name evoking darkness: see Moisan for various forms (vol. 2, p. 914).

Tervagant: one of the ‘unholy trinity’ of pagan gods. Referred to, 6, 57, 66, 93, 121, 1323, 137, 163, 173, 185, 205, 217. Frequently found: see, e.g., *Roland*, vv. 611, 2468, 2589.

Thierry of Blansdras: at Nicaea, 50; in first attack on Antioch, 126. See Albert of Biandrate (R-S, p. 198). A major hero of the 1101 Crusade.

Thomas of Coucy, lord of La Fère and Marle: at Nicaea, 50; questions Stephen of Blois, 72; releases prisoners, 122–3; in first attack on Antioch, 126; assigned tower at Antioch, 139; into Antioch, 253; in battle of Antioch, 355; rides to rescue of Gerard of Melun, 360–1. From Coucy (dépt. Aisne). Married to Ida of Hainault, cousin of Robert of Flanders; a byword for cruelty. Also in AA and RM (R-S, pp. 99, 156–7, 223). One of the main characters in the *Jérusalem*: see Duparc-Quioç, *Cycle*, pp. 39–44.

Tiason: Saracen, one of the pagan leaders in the battle of Antioch, 356. Not found elsewhere.

Titus: emperor of Rome (ce79–81) and responsible for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Referred to in context of vengeance theme, 12.

Tonicles: Saracen, at Antioch, 121. Possibly derived from ‘Turcois’, Turkish (Moisan, vol. 2, p. 935).

Torbant, son of Roel: Saracen, killed by Hugh of St-Pol at Nicaea, 56. Not found elsewhere.

Torcan: Saracen, killed by Bohemond at Dorylaeum, 94.

Torcant: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87. Appears twice (as Torgent) in the *Moniage Rainouart* (vol. 2), once as a cunning elderly Saracen (vv. 793–989) and once as a Saracen left alive to escort corpses (vv. 695–760).

Torgis: Saracen, killed by Torgis, 74. Compare *Fierabras*, v. 1663, *Roland*, v. 358.

Tornicans, son of Soliman: at Nicaea 51; referred to, 63, 74, 83, 103–5.

Tornicant, son of Barolfe: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87.

Tornicant: Saracen, killed by William Fitzmarquis, 97. Possibly same as above.

Torsolt of Tiberias: Saracen, sent to find Bohemond and Tancred, 87. See Corsolt.

Tribuans, Soliman’s uncle: Saracen, referred to, 103. Compare Tribué at *Aliscans*, v. 7684.

Trollant: one of the companions of Judas, 13.

Tumes: Thomas, goes to Hell for doubting, 13. The story is not found elsewhere.

V

Vespasian: Roman emperor ce69–79; referred to in context of vengeance theme, 12; as previous owner of sword, 177.

veterans from Spain: in battle of Antioch, 321.

Virgin Mary: *passim*; in vision with Christ and St Peter to priest of St Mary the Virgin in Antioch, 288–9.

Viviens: example of heroism, 337. Grandson of Aimeri of Narbonne, son of Garin d'Anseune and nephew of William of Orange; killed at Aliscans. Hero in *chansons de geste* of the *Guillaume* cycle (Moisan, vol. 2, p. 958).

W

Waleran of Bavaria: at Nicaea, 50. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 238).

Walo: in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere. Possibly to be identified with Walo II of Chaumont-en-Vexin: see below.

Walter of Caumont: at Nicaea, 50. Walo II of Chaumont-en-Vexin (dépt. Oise), constable of the king of France; widely attested (R-S, p. 224). RM accords great prominence to his death (pp. 139–40).

Walter of Domeart or Domedart: father of Bernard and always shown with him. At Nicaea, 50, 60; at Antioch, 120; in first attack at Antioch, 126; leads out column with son Bernard and Hugh and Enguerrand of St-Pol, 322; in battle of Antioch, 355. Also in AA and OV. Advocate of St-Valéry and viscount of Domart-en-Ponthieu (Murray, pp. 232–3; R-S, p. 224).

Walter, count of Forez: at Nicaea, 50. Probably to be identified with AA's William of Forez (R-S, p. 225). William III of Forez, count of Forez and Lyon.

Warner of Grey: at Nicaea, 50. Warner, count of Grez (dépt. Oise). In AA and WT (Murray, pp. 234–5; R-S, p. 206).

Wayland: forger of sword, 177. The famous blacksmith of Norse legend; well known in the *chansons de geste* as a master smith e.g. *Raoul de Cambrai*, v. 489; *Ronsasvals* vv. 41, 1592, in *Le Roland Occitan: Roland à Saragosse*; *Ronsasvals*, ed. and trans. G. Gouiran and R. Lafont (Paris, 1991); see Moisan for other references to him as a smith (vol. 1, p. 442).

Wicher the Swabian: at Constantinople, 43; in skirmish, 148; assists foraging expedition, 161; in reprisal for Rainalt Porcet, 187; referred to, 209; kills Corbabel at sack of Antioch, 262; comes to aid of Hugh with Godfrey, 339–41; in battle of Antioch, 355; captures pagan standard, 358; example of heroism, 359; killed by Claras de Sarmazane, 362–3. Ministerialis of Fulda (Hessen). He played a prominent role in the expedition of 1101, but was not present in 1096 or killed at Antioch as here: see Murray, p. 235. Widely attested (R-S, p. 224). Also Hungiers and Guigiers in the text.

William, married to Bohemond's sister: possesses Sidre, 111–12. William Grandmesnil. He had taken refuge at the Byzantine court following an unsuccessful rebellion in Apulia and was married to Bohemond's sister Mabel (R-S, p. 101). Widely attested (R-S, p. 226).

William Fitzmarquis: Tancred's brother. Heroism and death at Dorylaeum, 95–7. Widely attested as William Marchisus (R-S, p. 225).

William of Beauvais: retrieves Hugh's standard, 339; in battle of Antioch, 355. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 238).

William of Montpellier: William V, count of Montpellier; on siege engine at Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man, TC 7. Widely attested (R-S, p. 226). Stayed on in Holy Land after Crusade (R-S, pp. 158, 166).

William of Senlis: killed by Amedelis, 352. Not recorded elsewhere (R-S, p. 238).

William the Carpenter: viscount of Melun; at Nicaea, 50. Widely attested (R-S, 226). Crusaded in Spain in 1086 (R-S, p. 43). Led pogroms in Rhineland in 1096 (Asbridge, *First Crusade*, pp. 84–5) and tried to flee the siege of Antioch in January 1098 before being ignominiously retrieved by Tancred: *GF*, pp. 33–4.

Wiltre: Saracen, killed by William Fitzmarquis, 95. Not found elsewhere.

Willtans: Saracen, at Antioch, 120. Not found elsewhere.

women: lament departure of crusaders, 36–7; attacked at Dorylaeum, 92; fetch water for crusaders at Dorylaeum, 99; column of at battle of Antioch, 327–8; fetch water in battle of Antioch, 353. See also S. B. Edgington, “‘*Sont cou ore les fems que jo voi la venir?*’” Women in the *Chanson d'Antioche*’, in S. B. Edgington and S. Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 154–62; S.-G. Heller, ‘Surprisingly Historical Women in the Old French Crusade Cycle’, in S. S. Poor and J. K. Schulman (eds), *Women and Medieval Epic: Gender, Genre and the Limits of Epic Masculinity* (New York and Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 41–66.

Y

Yaghi-Siyan: fictionalized as *Garsion*, q.v.

Ysoré: Saracen, Garsion's nephew. Referred to, 175. Common Saracen name (Moisan, vol. 2, pp. 971–74).

Yvon: enters Antioch, 253. Not recorded elsewhere.

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